

Pleasanton Weekly

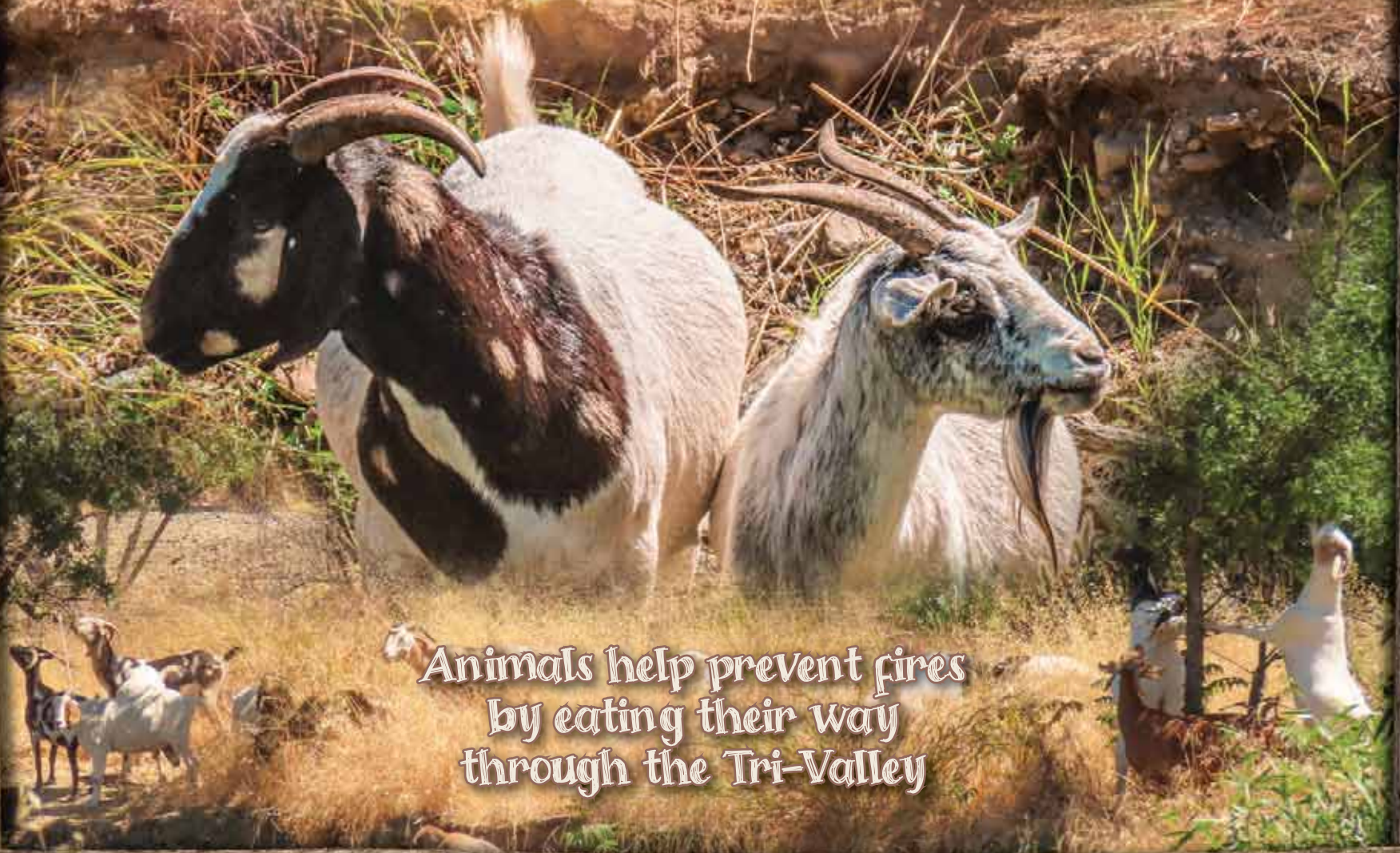
VOL. XXIV, NUMBER 27 • JULY 28, 2023

**New LV Opera
season beckons**

Page 14

WWW.PLEASANTONWEEKLY.COM

GOAT IN THE ZONE



*Animals help prevent fires
by eating their way
through the Tri-Valley*

Page 12

5 | NEWS High marks in Pleasanton community survey

5 | NEWS Winery owner dies after car crash in Livermore

16 | PULSE Foothill alum charged in sexual assault cases



EXPRESS LANES

Set toll tag correctly. CHP enforces improper use.



511 511.org



**Emerson
Montessori School**
Pleasanton



**Open House
Friday,
August 4,
5:00-7:00 PM**

Nurturing Tomorrow's Leaders

- Individualized, self-paced curriculum for core subjects (including mathematics, language arts, science)
- Chinese, Spanish, art, music, technology, PE
- Year-round, full-day program for grades 1-8
- Cultivation of thinking skills, life skills, and values

Open House Schedule

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 5:00-5:30 | Tour |
| 5:30-5:50 | "How to Help Your Child 1-12 Enjoy Reading"
by Chuck Bernstein, Ph.D. |
| 5:50-7:00 | Tours, Questions & Answers
School and Preschool Teachers |



HeadsUP!
Montessori Preschool
Pleasanton



**Open House
Friday,
August 4,
5:00-7:00 PM**

In Good Hands Starting at 6 Months

- Individualized Montessori
- Chinese, Spanish, art, music, movement
- Year-round, full day caretaking for ages 0-6
- Bilingual Chinese-English classroom option
- Cultivation of thinking skills, life skills, and values

4671 Chabot Drive, Pleasanton

Emerson Montessori School	Heads Up Montessori Preschool
925-485-5750	925-463-2885
EmersonMontessori.com	HeadsUp.org

Not available 8/4? Call for a private tour!

Spate of bad crashes

We never really know what the weekend is going to bring us, breaking news-wise. Unfortunately the Tri-Valley got it in spades last Friday through Sunday.

As is typical with our small editorial staff, I found myself on call over the weekend to handle any major news that arose. It's not always easy with a toddler at home and family activities on the schedule, but it's a necessary part of the job to work in time to report on the breaking stories our readers expect from our team during off-hours.

Not every story, of course; it is important to set personal-professional boundaries and recognize that a lot of the tasks can wait until Monday ... should wait until Monday. As a news-hound at heart, that balance can still be something I struggle with — but I like to think I'm getting better at prioritizing as a father, husband and editorial director.

The news cycle doesn't always cooperate though.

I remembered seeing social media posts on Friday from Livermore police and Danville police about serious car crashes in their respective jurisdictions that necessitated road closures and investigations. But come Saturday, the public chatter was indicating that each crash turned fatal.

As I worked to confirm information from official sources (during Saturday naptime), I learned there was possibly a third fatal crash on Friday night in the Tri-Valley, so I reached out to the California Highway Patrol about what might've happened on Pleasanton Sunol Road.

Oh, and all the while, I was chasing a lead from one of my colleagues who lives in Pleasanton and was roused like many of her neighbors before 3 a.m. Saturday by the sounds of explosions and fire department response.

As it turned out, that wasn't the only major fire news from that period — as Alameda County Fire, Cal Fire and CHP reported about separate blazes on grassland on the Altamont Pass alongside Interstate 580, including a series from Saturday morning likely ignited by an arsonist. Fortunately all were contained, preventing extensive damage.

And while I was writing on Saturday night, initial reports were coming across about another fatal wreck in the CHP-Dublin jurisdiction.

That made six breaking news stories for me to publish between Saturday and Sunday. You can read all of those inside today's paper, if you didn't already read them online.

The sad total ended at four fatal crashes in a 30-hour period for the greater Tri-Valley.

Each loss is profound — and at least two of the families still haven't been notified, per my coroner's sources.

The local community, and the wine industry at large, was particularly jolted by the news that the man who died after the two-vehicle collision on East Avenue in Livermore was longtime vintner Mitchell Katz, who leaves behind two sons and his namesake winery on South Vasco Road barely over a mile from the crash site.

I hate seeing a spate of fatal crashes like that, but I think it's important to cast them through that prism when multiple happen in such succession.

I was reminded of Christmas week 2020, when three collisions killed five people (including three teenagers) within roughly 33 hours in Livermore.

Then there was the time around Labor Day 2021 when the Tri-Valley saw five deadly collisions in a 10-day stretch, including the devastating news that the toll from that span actually increased when a 6-year-old victim in a Sunol crash died at the hospital from her injuries 10 weeks later.

As a journalist, I don't think you ever get used to covering these terrible traffic fatalities, but you do become more proficient at it. You learn what to observe at the site, what questions to ask of authorities, how to approach the families and how to keep track of the often-lengthy investigations.

That last one can be particularly impactful for the community and even those involved. On more occasions than I care to count, families have heard from me or through my reporting that the formal investigation into their late loved one's crash has been completed (usually some time ago), what the results are and even whether charges have been filed if another driver was involved.

As much pride as I take in my dogged reporting skills, that's not news I care to break to those directly affected by the tragedies, but I understand it can happen. And you can be sure our team will be tracking these four investigations closely through to completion. ■

About the Cover

A large herd of goats, which are part of the Zone 7 Water Agency's Goat in the Zone project to reduce fire fuels such as vegetation and shrubbery, eat away at plants and other things that could spread fires along the Arroyo Mocho in Livermore on July 12. Photos by Christian Trujano. Cover design by Doug Young.



REAL ESTATE GROUP

DRE# 01243871 | 01001584

Realtor®, CRS, GRI, SRES

925.463.0436

Sue @SoldInAFlash.com

SoldInAFlash.com



COMING SOON! IN KOTTINGER RANCH



PLEASANTON
5 Bedrooms | 3.5 Baths | 2,318 Sq Ft | 0.52 Acres Lot
Beautiful estate nestled in sought-after Kottinger Ranch. Boasting contemporary upgrades, sparkling pool and steps to hiking trail.

COMING SOON! CHARMING ALAMO HOME



ALAMO
3 Bedrooms | 2 Baths | 1,414 Sq Ft | 0.51 Acres Lot
Tucked away in beautiful Alamo, this charming single-story home on a large lot has dream home potential.

SOLD IN A FLASH! 8 OFFERS
SOLD \$142,000 OVER ASKING PRICE!



805 GRAY FOX CIRCLE, PLEASANTON
4 Bedrooms | 2.5 Baths | 2,840 Sq Ft
Beautifully updated throughout with garden views. Situated in the highly sought after neighborhood known as Foxbrough estates. *Sold for \$2,440,000*

SOLD IN A FLASH! \$50K OVER ASK



6291 ROSLIN COURT, PLEASANTON
4 Bedrooms | 2 Baths | 1,947 Sq Ft | 6,200 Sq Ft Lot
Quaint single story home in the sought-after Val Vista Neighborhood. *Sold for \$1,548,000*

COMING SOON! IN FOXBROUGH ESTATES



PLEASANTON
4 Bedrooms | 3.5 Baths | 3,903 Sq Ft | 0.64 Acres Lot
Gorgeous custom home on a sprawling half acre+ parcel. Fabulous floor plan with a primary suite on the first and second floor!

SOLD IN A FLASH! 4 OFFERS
SOLD \$50,000 OVER ASKING PRICE!



968 GRAY FOX CIRCLE, PLEASANTON
4 Bedrooms | 3 Baths | Over 3,400 Sq Ft
Gorgeous ½ acre parcel with new PebbleTec pool and waterfall. Stunning quartz kitchen and open beam family room. *Sold for \$2,950,000*

SALE PENDING!



1413 CHADBOURN COURT, PLEASANTON
4 Bedrooms | 2 Baths | 2,496 Sq Ft
We were honored to represent the buyers in this purchase. *Offered at \$2,395,000*

ANOTHER SOLD HOME!



2832 GRAY FOX COURT, PLEASANTON
5 Bedrooms | 3.5 Baths | 4,025 Sq Ft | 1.12 Acres Lot
Private and serene custom home on almost an acre with captivating hillside views.

YOUR HOME DESERVES AN EXPERT

We can help you sell your home for the best price possible.
Contact us to review our comprehensive home - selling services and complete marketing plan.

Celebrate Amador Valley's 100th



Sept. 14-16, 2023

Parade Sept. 15th at 2:30 pm Main Street Pleasanton

Pancake Breakfast Sept. 16th 8:30am-11:00am AVHS Outside Multipurpose Room

www.Amador100.com

Streetwise

ASKED AROUND TOWN

What do your parents do to keep you comfortable when it's really hot outside?



Bogey Heinitz

Best sidekick

My mom keeps me mostly inside in our cool house and makes sure I always have a full bowl of water. I love seeing her add ice cubes to it throughout the day in order to make sure it's cold for me. She really makes me feel so special and loved.



Polly and Poppy Lewis

Sparkers of joy

Our parents never take us out on walks when it's hot out because when it's over 80 degrees outside, the temperature of the asphalt roadways is at least 30 degrees hotter. They don't want our little feet to get burned, so instead they only let us outdoors to play in the yard and in other grassy areas.



Baljinder "Benji" Singh

Chick magnet

My parents have a special "cooling mat" for me. They make it cool and then put it in a shady spot in the backyard. They try to create a lot of different shady spots for me so that I won't get bored by being in the same place for too long. And if it's too hot to be comfortable outdoors, they just keep me inside with plenty of toys to keep me occupied and entertained.



Violet Loring

Diva

Well there are times that I'll be perfectly happy, basking in a patch of sun by the side of the pool, and my mom will pick me up and bring me inside so that I won't overheat. It's so annoying, but I know her heart is in the right place so I cooperate and treat her like she is a hero for saving me from myself.



Duffy Epstein

Between jobs

My dad often takes me to the dog park so that I can socialize with my friends on a surface that won't burn the pads of my feet. When it's really hot, we don't stay there for as long as usual, but it sure is nice to get out for at least a little bit, even in the heat.

—Compiled by Nancy and Jeff Lewis



YOU CAN AFFORD COLLEGE!
Aid to cover the cost of college is available to students who need it. Nothing should stand in the way of your future.

APPLY TODAY



LAS POSITAS
COLLEGE

Have a Streetwise question? Email editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

The Pleasanton Weekly is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 203, Pleasanton, CA 94566; (925) 600-0840. Mailed at Periodicals Postage Rate, USPS 020407. The Pleasanton Weekly is mailed upon request to homes and apartments in Pleasanton. However, in order to continue delivering you the news you depend on, we encourage you to become a paid subscribing member. Go to www.PleasantonWeekly.com/subscribe to start supporting the Pleasanton Weekly today.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Pleasanton Weekly, 5506 Sunol Blvd., Suite 203, Pleasanton, CA 94566. ©2023 by Embarcadero Media. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

DIGEST

Reps' town hall

The Tri-Valley's two members of the U.S. House of Representatives — Eric Swalwell and Mark DeSaulnier — are joining forces for a combined town hall meeting in Dublin on Monday.

"Are you wondering what Democrats are working on in Congress? Curious about how our efforts will help Tri-Valley families? ... We'll talk about these topics and more, and answer your questions," DeSaulnier said in announcing the event in his email newsletter.

The town hall meeting is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. Monday (July 31) at the Shannon Community Center at 11600 Shannon Ave. in Dublin.

Barbecue fundraiser

The Pleasanton Community of Character Collaborative is getting ready to host its annual fundraising barbecue benefiting its Juanita Haugen Memorial Scholarship, which honors the legacy of the late community leader and former school board trustee.

This year's fundraiser is set for 6 p.m. Aug. 19 at the home of retired police captain and former interim police chief Craig Eicher in Pleasanton. Tickets for \$75 per person are available at the Chamber of Commerce website at www.Pleasanton.org.

All of the ticket prices, as well as proceeds from auction items that evening, will go directly to the scholarship fund, as the cost of the dinner is being donated by the collaborative's board.

The recipients of this past school year's Juanita Haugen Scholarships were Shree Billa and Tony Wang of Amador Valley High School, Isaac Gavino and Arian Moghni of Foothill High School and Tyler Dawe of Village High School. For more information, go to www.communityofcharacter.org.

Passport fair

The city of Dublin's passport services office at 100 Civic Plaza will be open for special Saturday appointments on Aug. 5 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The passport fair will require applicants to book an appointment in advance, and the scheduling period will open online beginning at 12:01 a.m. next Tuesday (Aug. 1) via www.dublin.ca.gov/passports.

Those applying for passports should bring materials to the appointment including a completed application form (found at eforms.state.gov), evidence of U.S. citizenship, photo identification, two passport photos (per person) and payments for application and execution fees.

All applicants, including children, must be present during the process, and for kids under 16 years old, both parents must be present with identification. ■

Survey shows 91% of respondents praise quality of life in Pleasanton

While posting mostly high marks, results tick slightly downward compared to previous years

By CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

A recent community survey showed that while Pleasanton residents continue to highly praise the quality of life and safety in the city, the overall trends in those and other topics have trended downward over the past six years.

At the City Council meeting on July 18, consultant Miranda Everitt presented the results of the city's 2023

community survey, which her firm conducted from May 24 to June 7 with about 700 residents filling out the survey undertaken primarily over text and phone calls.

"Many of my statewide surveys are 600 to 800, so (700 respondents) is very robust for a city of your size," said Everitt, senior vice president of the public opinion research and strategy group Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin,

Metz and Associates (FM3).

Some of the positive highlights from the survey presentation were that 91% of residents rated the quality of life in Pleasanton as excellent or good and 89% said the same for the city being a good place to raise children.

"Folks overall are quite pleased to live in the community," Everitt said. "The name speaks for itself and

continues to."

With that said, there has been a slight negative trend down over the last few years — Everitt explained how that quality of life number was 94% in 2021. In 2017 and the few years before then, that number hovered at or just below 97%, with fewer people choosing the "good" selection

See **SURVEY** on Page 8

DUSD halts grading discussions

Board majority backs status quo; teachers share reflections

By NICOLE GONZALES

Board members of the Dublin Unified School District have voted to halt further discussions of standards-based grading policies, removing the possibility of implementing the new system in local schools for the foreseeable future.

The district held a special board meeting last week to discuss and review material related to standards-based grading. After reviewing additional research, survey results and listening to public comments, the board majority ultimately decided to discontinue talks around the alternative grading system.

"I want to discontinue equity and standards-based grading. It's very simple. Let's get rid of this idea and put it to bed," Trustee Dan Cherrier said in vocalizing his opposition to the new grading system. "(Teachers) can still teach how they have always taught."

The special meeting came less than a month after Superintendent Chris Funk, who backed the proposal, led a presentation to the board about the benefits he sees with standard-based grading over the current system — which he described then as "an inequitable practice" much of which "does not grade anyone's mastery of the subject content". Funk's update was followed by a range of community comments, both to the board that night and afterward on social media and other public circles.

See **GRADING** on Page 10



COURTESY LIVERMORE PD

The aftermath of the crash on East Avenue in Livermore on July 21 that ultimately claimed the life of local winery owner Mitchell Katz.

Livermore winery owner dies after crash along East Avenue

First of four fatal collisions in Tri-Valley in 30-hour span

By JEREMY WALSH

A longtime Livermore Valley vintner died at an area hospital from injuries sustained in a collision with another vehicle on East Avenue last Friday afternoon, marking one of four fatal crashes within 30 hours across the greater Tri-Valley.

The Alameda County Coroner's Bureau confirmed on Sunday that the victim killed in the crash was 59-year-old Livermore resident Mitchell Katz. The circumstances of the two-vehicle collision remain under investigation by the Livermore Police Department.

Katz was the owner and operator of Mitchell Katz Winery on South Vasco Road, dedicated to creating wines with "extraordinary flavor, richness and intensity," according to its website.

"We have suffered a tragic loss ... Our dad, Mitchell Katz, was unexpectedly taken from us," Katz's sons Jackson and Wes said in a post on

Facebook shared by the winery.

"At this time, we don't have any additional information to offer. As expected, we his family and extended family are all (devastated) and saddened by this tragedy," they added. "Thank you to all who have reached out with your sincere condolences. We ask for your continued support and respect of our privacy during this time. Your patience is appreciated as we gather more information and begin to heal."

Condolences and remembrances poured out on the Mitchell Katz Winery Facebook page over the weekend.

"So very sad to hear this news. I've known him for a long time but became better friends with him these last couple of years. One of the hardest workers I know and always spoke about his two sons with great pride. I will miss our long conversations, my friend. You will be missed. Rest

easy!" local business owner and resident Jody Amos said in the Facebook comments.

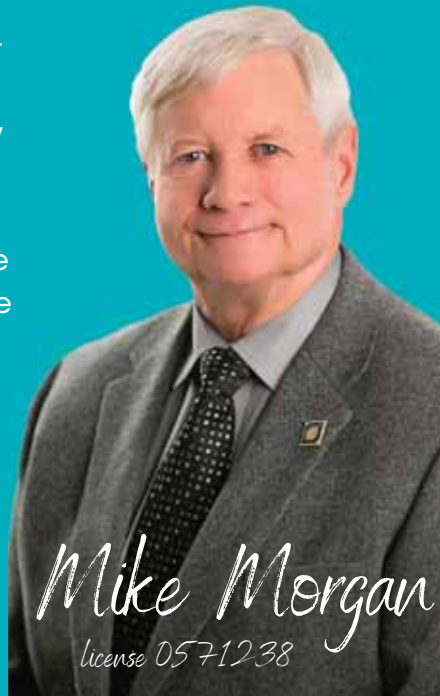
"I can't believe the news. My husband worked with Mitch 16 years ago, and we have been drinking MK wine ever since. Mitch was the most generous person. Every time we went to pick up our wine, and he was there, he was always telling us about his sons. He was so proud of them. Wow. What a tragic loss. We will keep Mitch's family close to our hearts. We are so sorry," Stephanie Rose Doan added among the scores of comments.

Livermore police first reported about the crash on Friday afternoon (July 21), alerting people to the roadway closure westbound during the investigation and cleanup. They then confirmed on Saturday afternoon that the seriously injured victim — later identified as Katz — had died at

See **CRASHES** on Page 10

Protect your family
with life insurance!

Call me today for
your free, no-
obligation review
of your life
insurance needs!
We represent the
most competitive
and financially
stable insurance
companies and
can find you the
best rate for
your needs.



Mike Morgan
license 0571238

Gene Morgan Insurance Agency
2020 Fourth Street, Livermore
(925) 447-2565 ext. 2220
mike@genemorganinsurance.com

MULTIPLAN_MAFLYERGMI_M

LIVE AT THE BANKHEAD

CALIFORNIA COUNTRY MEETS FOLK ROCK



FRI AUG 19

GET TICKETS NOW!
LivermoreArts.org
935.373.6800

Tri-Valley ready to join in celebration of National Night Out

Event aims to create partnerships between police and
communities while raising awareness

By JOSIE DE LA TORRE

Tri-Valley residents and their police departments will come together next Tuesday toward the goal of improving relations within the community and supporting crime prevention.

National Night Out is held every year on the first Tuesday of August and has been a tradition many communities participate in annually. In the Tri-Valley area, there will be neighborhood barbecues, potlucks, block parties, activities for adults and children, and visits from local fire and police officials.

"It allows the community to come together to discuss current crime trends that may be occurring in their neighborhood or city," Pleasanton Police Officer Ryan Tujague told the Weekly. "We have an amazing community. Some community members have live music, jumpy houses, balloon or egg toss, water guns, talent shows, etc."

National Night Out is meant to raise awareness about anti-crime efforts, neighborhood watch groups and drug prevention programs. It also aims to help promote partnerships between residents and local law enforcement.

The Pleasanton Police Department is inviting the community and neighborhoods to celebrate National Night Out to get to know their local police, fire department and community members.

Pleasanton has done National Night for over 20 years and includes 40 block parties each year. Each block party will have their own activities and entertainment for both adults and children. For questions about the 2023 event, contact crime prevention at 925-931-5100 or crimeprevention@cityofpleasantonca.gov.

"National Night Out is an opportunity for the community to come together, meet their neighbors and connect with Livermore



COURTESY DANVILLE PD

A Danville neighborhood takes part in National Night Out last year.

Police as well as representatives from the Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department, CHP Dublin, Alameda County Sheriff's Office, Livermore Area Parks and Recreation District, and East Bay Parks Regional Police Department. It promotes partnerships and it's an annual event that our department looks forward to every year," said Azenith Smith, media and community relations analyst for the Livermore Police Department.

Last year's National Night Out event in Livermore included over 50 block parties with many having bounce houses, potlucks, food trucks and games for children.

National Night Out will be celebrated this year in Livermore on Tuesday (Aug. 1) from 5-8 p.m. For more information, contact Livermore PD's Crime Prevention Unit at CrimePrevention@LivermoreCA.gov.

Dublin will also be joining the Tri-Valley celebration of National Night Out on Tuesday.

Those who registered will be visited by Dublin Police, Alameda County Fire, and/or Dublin City

officials. For more information, contact Dublin Police Crime Prevention Unit at 925-833-6677 or 925-833-6686.

Danville will be participating in its 40th National Night Out event on Tuesday from 6-9 p.m.

"National Night Out brings neighbors together and encourages community partnerships with law enforcement. Over the years, Danville neighborhoods have celebrated with various block parties, cookouts, and other community events for all ages," said Lindsay Ortiz, community services and crime prevention coordinator for the Danville Police Department.

For more information about this year's festivities, contact Ortiz at 925-314-3717.

San Ramon will be joining the nationwide National Night Out in supporting crime and drug prevention. The event will take place from 5:30-9 p.m. Tuesday.

To learn more about plans underway in San Ramon, contact Theresa Sanchez at 925-973-2740 or tsanchez@sanramon.ca.gov. ■

Exploding ammo makes for loud residential fire

Exterior structures burn, main house spared

By JEREMY WALSH

Residents in a Pleasanton neighborhood were awoken by the sound of exploding ammunition during a shed fire early Saturday morning.

The incident unfolded at around 2:30 a.m. on the 800 block of Abbie Street, not far from downtown. Livermore-Pleasanton Fire Department personnel were called out to a report of a structure fire, with responding units finding

flames actively burning at the side of a house, according to battalion chief Craig LaRont.

At the scene, a shed, car, carport awning with miscellaneous items, 30-foot fence and exterior wall of a detached 10-foot-by-20-foot building were burning, according to LaRont. The main house sustained minor damage from two windows that broke, while the house next door was undamaged.

Neighbors said they heard

explosions during the fire, reported to be ammunition that was stored at the property, according to LaRont. No injuries were reported during the incident.

LPFD crews — which included four engines, one truck and two battalion chiefs — were on scene for approximately two hours for the firefight and mop-up, according to LaRont. The cause of the fire has not been determined and remains under investigation. ■

Lawsuit alleges dealer sold used truck from police case to unsuspecting buyer

Plaintiffs claim vehicle was shoddily repaired; Livermore Toyota 'vigorously' denies wrongdoing

By DAVE BROOKSHER / BCN

A Livermore car dealership is accused of unfair business practices after allegedly selling a used truck that had been involved in a fatal police pursuit without disclosing that information to the buyer, according to a lawsuit filed last month in Alameda County.

Wendy Montes and Jose Nevarez Jr. say they bought a 2019 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 truck from Livermore Toyota on Sept. 1, 2021 — and the dealership did not notify them about major damage related to a collision.

An airbag was allegedly not working properly, so they had the vehicle inspected by another

dealership, and thereby discovered additional damage to the frame and wiring.

The plaintiffs further allege the vehicle had been used to traffic drugs across state lines, that the previous owner died inside the vehicle, and that none of those details were made available to them during the sales process. They say

they would never have purchased the truck if Livermore Toyota had notified them of the vehicle's history.

"I personally think Livermore Toyota bought this truck, I'm sure very cheap, cleaned up the blood and sold it to us without disclosing anything," Montes said via text message last week.

Livermore Toyota initially responded to questions regarding the lawsuit with an unsolicited price quote on several used cars, but attorney Patrice Harper reached out later on the dealership's behalf with the following statement: "We vigorously deny these allegations and look forward to the company's vindication in court." ■

Wetherford promoted to deputy city manager in Dublin

Staffer has risen through ranks with focus on economic development

By JOSEPH CHIU

Hazel Wetherford has been appointed as Dublin's deputy city manager, with the promotion to the new position created by City Manager Linda Smith set to take effect on Monday.

Wetherford has worked for the city government for the past 12 years in various roles including senior management analyst, business manager, assistant to the city manager and her most recent position, economic development director. She told the Weekly that these experiences and her background in local government have prepared her for this new opportunity.



Hazel Wetherford

"I am beyond excited to have this amazing opportunity to continue serving the Dublin community," Wetherford said. "I look forward to working with both current and former colleagues, as I believe that a strong and cohesive team is key to being successful in all you set out to do."

"Working on large projects of varying complexities requires fostering relationships, problem solving and thinking creatively," Wetherford added. "These are all skills that I use daily working with business owners, corporations, property owners, regional organizations, developers and key community stakeholders."

Smith lauded Wetherford when announcing the appointment in a press release last week.

"Hazel has proven to be an invaluable asset to the city over the years and has led much of the city's economic recovery efforts

during the pandemic," Smith said. "She's an innovative thinker and has the drive to bring two of the city's top priorities to the forefront — Downtown Dublin and the extension of Dublin Boulevard to Livermore."

In her new role, Wetherford will continue overseeing the economic development department, stating that her goal is to ensure that the Dublin community continues to thrive economically and socially. Additional responsibilities include legislative issues and disaster preparedness in Dublin.

Other plans include specifically focusing on the redevelopment of Downtown Dublin, the future Economic Development Zone and the extension of Dublin Boulevard to Livermore. In the long-term, she said she plans to build upon the work already done by current and former city leaders, which she describes have made Dublin the

vibrant and thriving city it is today.

"By implementing the Downtown Dublin Preferred Vision and the Fallon Road Economic Development Zone, I aspire to have a profound and positive effect on the Dublin

community," Wetherford said. "I aim to create job opportunities and improve the overall economic well-being of our residents by fostering a strong economy and attracting businesses to the area." ■

**WINE & SPIRITS
RETAILER OF THE YEAR!**

**2 WEEKS ONLY!
AUGUST 2ND THROUGH
AUGUST 15TH**



**SUMMER
WINE SALE**

20% OFF

**DOMESTIC &
IMPORTED WINES!
12 OR MORE BOTTLES**

Save 20% when you purchase 12 or more bottles of wine. Sale applies to 750ml bottles only. Some already reduced or net-priced wines are not included. We stock over 3,000 of the world's finest wines, hand selected. Supplies are limited to stock on hand and all wines are sold on a first-come, first-serve basis. Sorry, we cannot hold wine for future purchase and delivery is extra during the sale. Wine Stewards on duty 9am-6pm every day.

**Draeger's
MARKET**

MENLO PARK | SAN MATEO | LOS ALTOS

OPEN 7AM - 9PM DAILY

BLACKHAWK OPEN 8AM - 8PM DAILY

<https://www.draegers.com/WineDepartment/Index.aspx>



TAILS AT TWILIGHT

Presented by Brooks Motor Cars
+ Quality Collision Group

**Saturday,
September 30
6-11pm**

**Palm Event Center
Pleasanton**

BENEFITING VALLEY HUMANE SOCIETY



valleyhumane.org

**TICKETS: [ValleyHumane.org/
events2/tails-at-twilight/](https://valleyhumane.org/events2/tails-at-twilight/)**

Paris Baguette set to open in Livermore next year

Retired Chevron engineer takes on bakery business

By CIERRA BAILEY

A mechanical engineer turned bakery owner is expanding her business into Livermore.

When San Ramon resident Shahla Vatannia decided to retire from her career as a consulting engineer for Chevron, she didn't want to sit idly at home so she took on a new project — becoming a Paris Baguette franchise owner.

With one Tri-Valley store already successfully operating in Pleasanton at 6700 Santa Rita Road, Vatannia said she wanted to bring another location to the region to allow more people the opportunity to enjoy the pastries, breads, cakes

and other goods that the French-inspired pâtisserie is known for.

The Paris Baguette menu includes both sweet and savory options among its variety of croissants, pies, donuts, sandwiches and signature loaves. They also serve an assortment of specialty beverages including both iced and hot coffees and teas.

Planned to open in 2024, the Livermore bakery will be located on First Street near downtown, Vatannia said, adding to the many dining options available in that portion of town. Still in the early planning stages, Vatannia said that she is in the process of finalizing the lease

agreement and then will move ahead to the design and construction stages.

"I hope we can have a connection with the community and a very good connection with our customers and serve them the best quality," Vatannia said of her aspirations for the new store.

The Livermore bakery's forthcoming opening will bring the total number of locations within California to 89. However, there are more than 150 stores throughout the United States. The company plans to expand even further, with a goal to reach the 1,000-unit mark in the U.S. by 2030, according to the company's website. ■



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The latest Paris Baguette bakery in the East Bay is on track to open on First Street in Livermore in 2024.

SURVEY

Continued from Page 5

rather than the "excellent" selection.

Everitt said that while there is a "slight erosion in the intensity", the breadth of the number of people who give that top rating is still very high.

As for the city being a place to raise children, that number also slipped a bit, as it was at 94% before the pandemic.

In terms of safety, according to the survey 93% of residents said they feel very safe or safe, which is also a lower number compared to 2017 when 98% of respondents said that. This time around, 47% of those respondents said they felt very safe, which was different to in 2017 when 82% said they felt very safe.

"Again, that figure is not people saying they feel unsafe for the most part; it is much more moving into that somewhat category that that middling category instead," Everitt

said, attempting to reassure the council that the trends aren't necessarily a bad thing.

"There are some trends that are a little more negative than in prior years, and we'll see that kind of consistency across several questions. But compared to other neighboring cities, especially throughout the region, you guys are in kind of a cut above," Everitt added.

She also said, in response to Vice Mayor Jack Balch's question of why the city might be trending down in certain areas, that there are a lot of outside factors that could affect how people might feel about things like safety, crime and the economy.

But she said that Pleasanton's numbers are still overall in the 80% and 90% ranges, which is much better than other cities she has surveyed.

"It's gratifying to see that a lot of the same trends continue," Councilmember Jeff Nibert said regarding the overall high scores.

"Even though maybe the intensity has dropped down a little bit, it is heartening to know that we are in the top tier."

But apart from several high marks, the survey also highlighted some areas for improvement and concerns from residents.

According to Everitt, some of the most serious issues residents are facing that they want the city government to tackle is crime (with 21% of respondents raising concerns) and housing costs or lack of affordable housing (with 15% of respondents raising concerns).

"I will note that in 2021 ... housing costs were the top issue at 15%, which is where it is now," Everitt said. "Crime was second then at 13%. So there's been a bit of an uptick in the share of folks who name that as their top concern."

She also showed how about one in 10 of the respondents said they were concerned about education in public

schools. Other concerns she pointed out were regarding traffic on city streets, overall growth, jobs, homelessness, water and drought.

On the lower end of the spectrum of concerns to residents were air quality, government waste, lack of growth and taxes.

One other area that was just as serious for residents was the concern of cost of housing, with lack of affordable housing for working families having gone up from 48% in 2021 to 58% this year.

Another big area for improvement on the city side, according to the survey, is planning for future infrastructure needs in terms of designing future roads, water and sewer systems, bridges and traffic controls.

And while respondents also continued to push for ensuring the city is able to provide funding for police, parks and good streets, one result that surprised Councilmember Julie Testa was the level of support from residents in a \$90 million bond for

infrastructure needs, particularly one focused on water.

According to the survey, about two-thirds of the respondents supported the idea of such a bond, which according to Testa, was not the case during the last survey when they asked that same question.

"That they're willing to support a bond for the infrastructure for water treatment and supply, that was a big surprise and really, I think, a very positive outcome," Testa said.

Even so, Balch hammered down on the negative trends during his closing remarks, saying that he thinks the waning of intensity for choosing the higher, positive marks is concerning to him.

"We should strive, obviously, to try to increase that intensity and I appreciate efforts by all to do that," he said. "We know we have our challenges in town and this is hopefully a good way to identify them and try to address them for a higher quality of life for all of us." ■



Your voice matters.

Join the Police Chief's Community Advisory Board, let's make Pleasanton better together!

Members of the Community Advisory Board have an active role in advising the Chief of Police, David Swing, on issues related to public safety. By partnering with proactive representatives, our police department can focus on developing long-term solutions that best serve our diverse community.

APPLY NOW!



For more information visit
policing.cityofpleasantonca.gov



PLEASANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
Community Advisory Board



TAKE US ALONG



On our honeymoon:
Newlyweds Cherie Buenaflor Cheung and Wes Cheung spent their honeymoon in South Korea and Bali, posing here with the Weekly at the Jogyesa Temple.

To submit your "Take Us Along" entry, email your photograph to editor@pleasantonweekly.com. Be sure to identify who is in the photo (names listed from left to right), the location, the date and any relevant details about where you took your Weekly.

'A lifesaving tool' — California's new mental health crisis line sees surge in calls

'We still have a long way to go,' says Bauer-Kahan, who authored bill one year ago

By ANABEL SOSA / CALMATTERS

California made it easier to call for help a year ago when it launched a simplified mental health crisis hotline: Dial three digits — 988 — and you can get in touch with a counselor immediately.

Since then, crisis centers have received more than 280,000 calls. That's twice as many as any other state, signaling to mental health advocates that the service was badly needed.

Now, California crisis centers are taking stock of the new hotline and making plans to expand services in the coming year. They aim to hire more staff and to build out Spanish language services.

"I think 988 met its intended goal, which is that the easy-to-remember three-digit number encouraged more people to seek help," said Narges Dillon, the executive director of the crisis center in Alameda County. "One of the dynamics we noticed is we're also getting a lot of first-time callers, which is a sign that there are new people reaching out for help. To me, that was at the core of creating this program."

Her center already had a local crisis line, but since the 988 rollout last year, the center has seen a 40% increase in calls.

"There has been a lot of curiosity," she said. Her team of crisis counselors grew by almost 50%, rising from 45 to 77. The center also has 100 volunteers.

California launched the hotlines after Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law to fund and expand crisis call

systems. It's one of 26 states that have passed laws to fund and sustain 988 hotlines.

Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda), whose district includes most of the Tri-Valley, wrote the bill and named it in the memory of Miles Hall, a 23-year-old Black man who was shot to death by Walnut Creek police in 2019 while he was experiencing a mental health emergency. She intended the bill to cut down on volatile 911 calls that could lead to police using unnecessary force.

"At the one-year mark, California has already passed legislation to implement 988 as a meaningful, police-free alternative to 911 for mental health crises in California," Bauer-Kahan said in a statement to CalMatters. "But we are in the throes of a mental health crisis, and we still have a long way to go."

By far, California has received the highest number of phone calls in the country, a 28% increase in volume since the lifeline launched. The number of calls was double the volume for the state with the second most, New York, according to Matt Taylor, director of network development for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

"Most of the time, talk-line people are able to talk through on the phone, and avoid in-person responses," said Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, who has been an advocate for mental health awareness. She said she wants Los Angeles to be equipped with enough mental health teams to accommodate everyone in her county.

Altogether, 5 million calls, chats and texts have been made so far across the country to 988 hotlines in the last year. That's 2 million more calls than the previous year, under the former 10-digit number.

Why was 988 created in the first place?

One in five U.S. adults are living with a mental illness, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

In 2005, Congress established a National Suicide Prevention Helpline number to provide around-the-clock suicide prevention help for those in crisis. But funding for those crisis centers was limited. Some also said the 10-digit number — 1-800-273-8255 — was too long, and that people were forgetting what to dial.

In response, Congress in 2020 passed a bipartisan bill to launch 988 as an alternative and former President Donald Trump signed it into law. By July 2022, the Biden administration had allocated \$1 billion to get the program up-and-running in every state. In the years to come, each state will be responsible for funding its own centers.

So far, 200 locally operated and funded crisis call centers are available nationwide.

In California, 1,116 crisis counselors work at 12 crisis centers across the state.

This year's state budget included \$19 million to support the program. Going forward the state expects to spend about \$12.5 million annually to support the program, according to Stephanie Welch, deputy secretary

of Behavioral Health at California Health and Human Services Agency.

"The biggest thing that I've recognized in my community is the ease of access," said Tonya Mann, crisis services administrator for Kern County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services. "When someone is in a crisis and they might be emotionally dysregulated, having that phone number to memorize is difficult."

Plans to expand 988 hotline

California call centers have some changes they want to make to the hotlines, including ensuring that people in need are directed to local resources. As is, the 988 services match callers to the area code on their phone. But when callers move away, they will still be connected to the clinic in their original place of residence.

Often, those calls will just get re-routed to their nearest clinic. But, some have expressed concerns over whether time is lost when those calls or chats are re-routed.

"As you can imagine, that's an imperfect system, but in any large urban center people are not necessarily living in the same place where they first got their cell phone," Dillon of the Alameda County Crisis Center said. "So we may then recommend them to the appropriate geographic area."

Last week, Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra announced that 988 will now offer Spanish text and chat services nationally.

Chris Kughn, the chief executive of Buckelew Programs, which responds to calls from Marin, Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino counties, said they already have Spanish-speaking counselors but "definitely need more."

Editor's note: If you or someone you know is in crisis, call or text 988 for the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741. ■



Heart of the Tri-Valley

A FUNDRAISER GALA BENEFITTING





September 8 - 6 PM

\$150 - Pleasanton

openheartkitchen.org

Did you know

70%

OF THE TRI-VALLEY'S WATER

must travel hundreds of miles to get here?



TRIVALLEY

WATER PARTNERS

LEARN MORE AT

TRIVALLEYWATER.ORG

GRADING

Continued from Page 5

The board heard public comments for over one hour on July 18, with many of the speakers voicing their concerns about the proposed grading system.

Arzoo Nasarabadi, a science teacher at Dublin High School, went before the board to describe her experience as a teacher implementing standard-based grading.

Nasarabadi attempted to set up a trial of an equitable grading system in her 2022-23 AP environmental science course, which she said failed to benefit her students.

"It was an ambitious endeavor and at the start of the school year, I knew the transition to equitable grading would be bumpy," Nasarabadi told the board. "Nevertheless, I wrote up an appropriate syllabus, rehearsed my expectations and advocated

for parent buy-in during back to school night."

"What resulted was a snowball effect of little disasters that eventually led to me abandoning equitable grading midway through the school year," she added. "What resulted was a hybrid model of equitable grading that left students discouraged and confused and some to develop study skills that would later result in lower AP scores."

Nasarabadi continued, saying that a transition to equitable grading would take a large amount of time, resources and training to be able to implement properly.

Monica Lewis, a teacher at Fallon Middle School, was a member of the initial standards-based grading trial period during the 2021-22 school year and shared her support of the new system, saying she experienced positive outcomes.

"I wish I had a whole hour to

really explain to you what my experiences were, the amazing changes I saw in my students. The amazing changes I saw in myself as a teacher," Lewis told the board.

"Actually, the traditional way of teaching gives us a lot more leeway to be unfair and biased against our students," she said. "Under the traditional system that is not standards-based grading, I can make up whatever metric I want on what kids have to do to get an A."

"When you switch to standards-based grading, all of those little things that create bias are removed from the grade book," Lewis added.

Following the public comment portion, board members shared their reactions and took a vote on two related motions.

Board President Gabi Blackman expressed support for slowing down standards-based grading efforts.

"I think grading needs to demonstrate what students have achieved, the knowledge they've gained and can they use it effectively," Blackman said. "I would support the idea of slowing things down because I think in some ways we need to really assess how this actually syncs with what four year colleges are looking for."

Trustee Kristin Speck shared remarks that highlighted the possible benefits of standards-based grading, explaining that when looking at report cards, results can vary significantly depending on the instructor.

"Some students got 50%, some got 100%, and it's just depending on who they got and what that teacher's methodology is," Speck said, later adding: "I believe we need to continue to get better as a district. We should always be striving to do the best for our students."

"Teachers collaborating together to figure out what's best for our students is part of this," Speck said. "One thing I like about the cohorts is that they have the structure to be together — they had support, and they had each other to discuss different aspects with."

Board members voted on the first motion to abandon the idea of a districtwide transition to standards-based grading within two years. The board was unanimously in approval of the motion, effectively halting all momentum of the new grading system.

On the second motion, members voted 3-2 to discontinue the existing standards-based grading cohorts in grades 7-12, with trustees Speck and Board Vice President Kristin Pelham dissenting. District staff was directed to stop efforts to encourage the grading style. ■

CRASHES

Continued from Page 5

a local hospital.

The situation unfolded at around 3:20 p.m. Friday on East Avenue at Mitra Street, between the North Mines Road and South Vasco Road intersections. Katz was seriously injured inside his white GMC SUV following a two-car collision, according to authorities.

"A preliminary investigation reveals the other driver in a black Subaru collided with the white GMC as the GMC was changing lanes on East Avenue," Livermore police said. The driver of the Subaru sedan, identified only as a man in his 20s from Westley in Stanislaus County, was said to be cooperating with police in their investigation.

"Police are awaiting toxicology results and won't be releasing any

more information at this time as it is still early in the investigation," officials said on Saturday afternoon.

Katz was transported from the scene to a local hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries, according to authorities.

Katz founded his namesake winery in 1998 to honor his grandfather who made hand-crafted wines, according to its website.

"Mitch ensures that only the finest, most intensely flavored grapes are used for Mitchell Katz' single vineyard wines," the winery website said of Katz's approach. "His diligent winemaking approach begins in the vineyard where all grapes are hand-harvested. Through his careful selection of grapes, and use of barrels for both fermentation and aging, Mitch has developed wines that are both an expression of ideal vineyard conditions and thoughtful winemaking."

Katz's death was the first of four fatal crashes across the greater Tri-Valley between Friday afternoon and Saturday night.

Hours after the fateful collision on East Avenue, a driver died after their SUV crashed into a tree alongside Camino Tassajara in Danville, town police confirmed.

The crash occurred just before 9 p.m. Friday on eastbound Camino Tassajara east Messiah Place — not far from the Sycamore Valley Road intersection — when a 2000 Toyota 4Runner went off the thoroughfare for unknown reasons and struck a tree, according to the Danville Police Department.

The driver, who was the sole occupant, was pronounced dead at the scene, police said. Their identity has not yet been released publicly, with family notifications still pending as of Tuesday afternoon, according to the Contra Costa County Coroner's Division.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation. The Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office Injury and Major Protocol Accident Callout Team (IMPACT) team was at the scene for hours overnight, with the eastbound side closed for about six hours between Messiah Place and

Shady Creek Drive, police said.

Approximately 20 minutes after the crash in Danville, California Highway Patrol officers were called out to the Sunol area where a driver was dead after his vehicle crashed into a tree along Pleasanton Sunol Road.

The Alameda County Coroner's Bureau on Sunday confirmed the decedent was Justin Hayman, 47, of Hayward.

The report first came in around 9:20 p.m. Friday that a vehicle had struck a tree along the county road north of the Highway 84 intersection, according to CHP-Dublin Officer Robert Purl.

A CHP unit responded to find the lone occupant of the vehicle unrestrained and unresponsive, and fire personnel soon arrived and pronounced the driver dead at the scene, according to Purl.

"During the initial investigation, no witnesses were located for this collision," Purl said. "Alcohol does not appear to be a factor in the crash." Anyone who has information about the crash can contact CHP-Dublin at 925-828-0466.

Exactly 24 hours later, CHP dispatch received a report about a serious crash that turned fatal on the

far-eastern edge of unincorporated Livermore just on the Alameda County side of the border with San Joaquin County.

At around 9:20 p.m. Saturday, a 2004 Harley Davidson motorcycle crashed on its own on eastbound Mountain House Road just west of West Grant Line Road, with the rider thrown off the bike onto the roadway and the motorcycle coming to rest on the right shoulder, according to Purl.

Just afterward, a 2024 Honda vehicle was coming upon the same location traveling eastbound on Mountain House Road at about 45-50 mph. "The driver of the Honda did not observe the motorcycle or its rider, on the dark road, prior to the crash. The Honda collided with the rider who had been ejected," Purl said.

The motorcyclist succumbed to injuries after the second crash, Purl said. The Honda driver was uninjured.

The circumstances of the fatal collision remain under CHP investigation. The decedent's name was not available for public release as of Wednesday morning, with family notification still pending, according to the coroner's bureau. ■

THE CITY OF PLEASANTON



HIGHLIGHTS

Human Services Commission Meeting

Wednesday, August 2, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Remillard Conference Room Operations Service Center – 3333 Busch Road.

- Receive an Overview of the Citywide Strategic Plan Project

Library Commission Meeting

Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Remillard Conference Room Operations Service Center – 3333 Busch Road.

- Receive an Overview of the Citywide Strategic Plan Project
- Receive a Calendar of Upcoming Library Programs and Events

To explore more about Pleasanton, visit us at www.cityofpleasantonca.gov



Stay up to date on
real estate market trends.

Scan to read
the Spotlight



Gina Piper
(925) 200-0202
LIC #01201349

Elation
REAL ESTATE

ELATIONRE.COM



PLEASANTON
127 Spring St. #230

DANVILLE
380 Diablo Rd. #201

Suspected arson fires lit along Altamont Pass last weekend

CHP seeks information about man seen in area

By JEREMY WALSH

Crews battled a handful of vegetation fires around the Altamont Pass area in unincorporated Livermore last Friday and Saturday, including some authorities believe were ignited by an arsonist.

The Alameda County Fire Department reported one fire broke out near eastbound Interstate 580 along the Altamont Pass in the area of North Flynn Road in Livermore just after 6:30 p.m. Friday. Crews were

able to contain the flames to 41 acres within an hour, and the firefight was deemed complete just after midnight, according to Cal Fire.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation, according to ACFD.

Then on Saturday morning, the California Highway Patrol stated that several fires were lit along the right shoulder of westbound I-580 on the Altamont by a suspected arsonist. The ignitions began just after 6:15 a.m. at the I-205/I-580 interchange

and continued to North Flynn Road.

Witnesses reported seeing a man wearing a blue shirt and black pants standing next to a newer-model white truck — possibly Chevrolet — adjacent to one of the fires on the Portola Avenue undercrossing, according to the CHP.

“The CHP is asking for your help in identifying the suspect and the white truck,” CHP officials said.

Later in the day Saturday, Cal Fire reported that a fire on I-580 and



COURTESY CHP-DUBLIN

Fire along I-580 in unincorporated Livermore on the morning of July 22.

Grant Line Road along the Altamont Pass was contained at 55 acres. It was unclear if this was one or more of the suspected arson fires that were also knocked down that day.

All of the fires caused significant traffic problems over the Altamont

between Friday evening and Saturday evening.

Anyone with information about the suspected arson fires can call CHP-Dublin at 925-828-0466 or on the weekends/after-hours at 707-641-8300. ■

Dublin theater among just 30 in world playing ‘Oppenheimer’ in 70mm

Director Nolan’s retrospective on atomic bomb creation debuts nationwide

By LYDIA SIDHOM / BCN

Only 30 theaters worldwide are playing the movie “Oppenheimer” in the large-screen format for which it is intended to be played — and two of them are in the Bay Area including Dublin.

The film centers around the “father” of the atomic bomb, Julius Robert Oppenheimer, and some of its scenes feature the University of

California, Berkeley campus, where Oppenheimer was a professor of physics from 1929 to 1943.

The AMC Metreon 16 theater in San Francisco and the Regal Hacienda Crossings theater in Dublin are the two venues in the Bay presenting the movie in the 70mm format.

The film was shot using one of the highest resolution cameras available today, a combination of IMAX

65mm and Panavision 65mm film stock. It is then best projected on IMAX 70mm, which Bay Area moviegoers can enjoy.

What’s special about seeing the movie in the 70mm presentation is essentially the sheer size of the screen. Only in these theaters will sequences expand vertically to fill the entire screen. This differs from the more common 35mm IMAX

screens, where the top and bottom get cropped.

It’s also the first time in history that a movie has combined shooting in IMAX 65mm with IMAX black-and-white analog photography.

The movie was directed by Christopher Nolan, who is known for his action-packed blockbuster films that make little use of computer-generated imagery, or CGI. Nolan did

not use any CGI for “Oppenheimer,” which adds to the visual appeal of the film.

This is Nolan’s sixth film to be shot on IMAX 65mm, following “The Dark Knight” in 2008, “The Dark Knight Rises” in 2012, “Interstellar” in 2014, “Dunkirk” in 2017 and “Tenet” in 2020.

“Oppenheimer” premiered on Friday. ■

WE’RE PROUD TO BRING OUR READERS SOME OF THE BEST JOURNALISM IN THE STATE.

The annual **California Journalism Awards** competition, which celebrates excellence in reporting, design, photography and multimedia recognized our organization with **17 awards** in the following categories:

- Arts & Entertainment Coverage
- Coverage of 2022 Elections
- Coverage of Business and the Economy
- Coverage of Youth and Education
- Editorial Comment
- Feature Photo
- Feature Story
- In-Depth Reporting
- Inside Page Layout & Design
- Investigative Reporting
- Land-Use Reporting
- News Photo
- Newsletter
- Open - Investigative Reporting
- Profile Story
- Video Journalism

Please help support the local journalism and the award-winning team that is driven by the desire to bring you fresh, original reporting.

We couldn’t do it without you.

Pleasanton Weekly

SUPPORT LOCAL JOURNALISM



Goat in the Zone

Animals help prevent fires by eating their way through the Tri-Valley

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

Imagine a job where all you have to do is eat and sleep. Well, for some Zone 7 Water Agency contractors, they get to live out that dream while also doing important safety work at the same time.

However, these aren't your typical workers — they're goats.

And while they are known for drawing in crowds of families and kids who love admiring them as they eat vegetation from a safe distance, what many might not know is that they are actually doing some serious work to prevent fires in an eco-friendly way.

Known as the "Goat in the Zone" project, Zone 7 first launched the program locally two years ago at a cost of \$160,000 annually.

It is run by the agency's maintenance and operations department, which also funds the program through the department's flood maintenance budget, according to Mark Miller, who manages maintenance and construction of the various flood channels for Zone 7 and has been overseeing the goat program ever since he first joined the agency in 2021.

"The program, since I've been involved with it, has been another resource that we've utilized for fire fuel reduction," he told the Weekly. "The program has been incredibly useful and very popular amongst everybody."

What Miller means by fire fuel reduction is what the herd of about

40 to 50 goats call another day of eating whatever they can and want.

That's because the goats are part of the agency's integrated vegetation management plan, which aims to control weeds, grass and shrubs along flood protection channels that, in some areas, also serve as recreational areas for Tri-Valley residents.

These areas — while beneficial to the communities — pose high fire risks, which makes the goats' job of vegetation maintenance even more important.

"They'll eat just about anything for fire fuels and vegetation," Miller said.

Apart from eating overgrown vegetation that gets dry in the summer months and is at risk of causing fires or blocking the flow of water in the flood channels during the rainy season, Miller said they also eat invasive species such as blackberries.

He said by consuming these and other invasive species, the goats help prevent those plants from moving downstream and spreading to other parts of the arroyos.

"It's really good that they kind of attack it and are willing to eat so much," Miller said.

The reason the goats are able to eat pretty much whatever they want is because they have been bred and raised to be "the ultimate grazing machine," according to Goats R Us, the contracted company that provides the goats for Zone 7 land this summer.

Goats R Us, which is a family-owned and -operated grazing company based out of Orinda, has been raising herds of goats that are eventually transported to everyone from homeowners and private landowners to public agencies like Zone 7.

The company focuses on mainly raising Angora goats because of their "hardiness and thick mohair, which keeps them comfortable in the chilly Northern California winters," but also house Alpine, Spanish, Boer, Pygmy, La Mancha and Nubian goats for different scopes of work for other projects.

"In addition, we have bred into our stock Alpine and Spanish goats, for extra hardiness and their ability to thrive on a wide variety of feed sources," according to the Goats R Us website. "Our goats are then divided up into herds that are specifically designed to work in a particular job site."

The company also recruits goat herders from places in South America who are sent to the work locations along with a border collie dog to tend and oversee the goats. The goatherds, who live out of trailers or mobile homes while out working with the goats, are specially recruited from South America due to their "outstanding ability to work with livestock," the company says.

But as these local animal celebrities currently eat their way through the different arroyos in the



Tri-Valley for the third fire season in a row, new state labor regulations could soon make it more expensive to provide their goat-grazing services.

In 2016, legislation signed into law entitled the herders to overtime pay that boosted their minimum monthly pay from \$1,955 in 2019 to \$3,730 this year.

These regulations specifically revolve around overtime laws and the fact that companies have historically been allowed to pay goat and sheep herders a monthly minimum salary rather than an hourly minimum wage, because of their round-the-clock schedule.

As Miller outlined, it's not like one could gauge the goat's work because the goats eat at their own schedule.

"That's one of the most common questions I get asked is, 'When are they coming to our neighborhood next or when are they going to be done here?'" Miller said. "It's not like a mower or a contractor, where you can say they'll be done on Tuesday."

But now, according to the California Farm Bureau, agencies like Zone 7 could see an increase in the monthly salary of herders from about \$3,730 to \$14,000 starting Jan. 1 because of that irregular work schedule.

According to the California Department of Industrial Relations, the average is already set to hit \$4,381 in 2025.

But Miller said that everything is already becoming more expensive these days and because the program is already so popular, he doesn't see Zone 7 moving away from the project in the future.

"Our priorities are always going to be fire protection and trying to do the more environmentally sustainable thing as well," said Alexandra Bradley, communications specialist at Zone 7.

Zone 7 General Manager Valerie Pryor added to that sentiment by saying that the agency does acknowledge the possibility of upcoming regulations in January potentially leading to increased costs associated with goat grazing and



when the time comes, the agency will have to reassess the program in relation to the agency's budget.

"Despite this, we recognize the numerous benefits that goats bring to vegetation management, watershed protection and fire fuel reduction in our flood channels," Pryor said in a statement to the Weekly. "If these regulations do come into effect, we will evaluate the overall cost-effectiveness of our goat grazing services. Nevertheless, our commitment to effective fire suppression techniques and environmentally sustainable practices remains unchanged."

According to Miller, the agency's contract with Goats R Us ends next year, which is when Zone 7 officials will reassess on whether they want to bring back the program. If they do, they will bid out on another contract either with that company or with another one, depending on the price.

But for now, Miller said that the goats will continue to cover as many areas as they can within this year's vegetation season, which

ends in October. He said that they usually try to get the work done earlier but due to the high demand for goats from other agencies, it took the goats a bit longer than anticipated to actually get started in the Tri-Valley.

And while there is that uncertainty in the future, Miller has nothing but praise for the program and hopes it will continue.

"The thorough job that they do; I mean, it's just incredible," Miller said. "All the positive feedback we've had over the last couple of years with this program ... it gets people interested in what we're doing here in the arroyos as far as maintaining the nature of the channel and the maintaining of a safe environment that everybody can enjoy."

According to Bradley, the goats, which are currently working their way through Livermore, should be moving to Pleasanton in approximately three weeks. Their next stop will be along the Arroyo Valle starting at Nevada Street and Bernal Avenue and will be moving their way westward. ■



Four-box at top: Dozens of goats from the Zone 7 Water Agency's "Goat in the Zone" fire prevention project eat away at the overgrown vegetation and shrubbery along the Arroyo Mocho in Livermore on July 12. Above: A goatherd fixes a piece of the fence that is put up around the herd ensure the safety of both the goats and the residents who walk along the arroyo trail. Far left: The goats are ideal for the job not just because of their large appetite for virtually anything but also ideal because of their agility in accessing the terrain.

New season beckons for Livermore Valley Opera

'Of Mice and Men'
in October,
'The Magic Flute'
next March —
plus Opera in
the Vineyard
back this
summer



COURTESY LVO

Livermore Valley Opera's popular annual fundraiser Opera in the Vineyard returns on Aug. 27 at Garré Vineyard to help kick off the group's 2023-24 season.



COURTESY LVO

Véronique Filloux



COURTESY LVO

Matthew Pearce



COURTESY LVO

Robert Mellon

BY NICOLE GONZALES

Opera fans in the Tri-Valley will have the chance to see live renditions of classic productions with the upcoming 2023-24 season of the Livermore Valley Opera.

The region's professional opera company has announced a list of productions and activities for its 32nd annual season, which will include two full-length operas at Livermore's Bankhead Theater in addition to several one-off events throughout the year.

"We're thrilled to announce our next season's lineup of shows and events," LVO communications director Leslie Silberman said. "We hope people, opera lovers or even those new to this type of performance, can come out and support the local singers and production members that put so much into these shows."

This fall, LVO will bring John Steinbeck's classic story "Of Mice and Men," adapted as a staged opera by Carlisle Floyd. Afternoon shows play Oct. 8 and 15 at 2 p.m., with evening times Oct. 7 and 14 at 7:30 p.m.

For their production of "Of Mice and Men," LVO has partnered with the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas. The two organizations are working to promote and educate the public on the works and life of John Steinbeck.

Stage-directed by Marc Jacobs,

the story follows two American migrant workers during the Great Depression and their search for work and resources.

An opening night dinner will be hosted at Uncle Yu's at the Vineyards, one block away from the Bankhead. Purchase of a separate ticket from the show is required.

The dinner will take place at 4 p.m., prior to the first performance of "Of Mice and Men". Visitors to the dinner are invited to attend a pre-opera lecture set to take place one hour before the show start time.

Then, in March 2024, the company will perform "The Magic Flute" by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, originally written in 1791 and regarded as one of the greatest operatic works of all time.

The show chronicles the life of Prince Tamino and his companion Papageno while the two embark on a mission to rescue Princess Pamina. The pair are given musical instruments known to be magical which they use throughout their journey.

Afternoon shows are March 3 and 10 at 2 p.m., while evening performances are March 2 and 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Both opera productions will be sung in English and accompanied by the LVO live orchestra, conducted by Alexander Katsman.

"We are happy to bring quality opera to the area and see folks enjoy it. These are two very classic and

well-known operas," Silberman said.

Apart from the full production shows, LVO will put on its annual one-night-only event, Opera in the Vineyard, that gives guests the opportunity to watch live performances backdropped by vineyard landscapes.

Taking place at Garré Vineyard in Livermore on Aug. 27 from 5-8 p.m., LVO staff have said the event will create an inviting backdrop for a relaxing, casual experience where "wine, music and community harmoniously intertwine."

Also announced as part of the upcoming season, the fundraising event "3 Redneck Tenors" is set to take place Feb. 17, 2024 at the Bankhead Theater.

The special event will feature a live comedic opera performance written by Tri-Valley native Matthew Lord and composed by Craig Bohmler. The 3 Redneck Tenors include singers Blake Davidson, Steven Sanders and Lord. In 2015, the group was among the top finalists on the competition show "America's Got Talent".

Founded in 1992, LVO began with the goal of bringing professional and engaging operas to the Tri-Valley. The company has employed a variety of local and national singers, musicians, stage directors, production staff and more over the years.

To find tickets or more information about LVO, visit www.livermorevalleyopera.com. ■

A colorful impact: The Crayon Initiative celebrating 10 years

Tri-Valley nonprofit preparing for annual Melt With You Festival fundraiser

By JOSEPH CHIU

Marking 10 years of helping kids and the environment, The Crayon Initiative is holding its third annual Melt With You Festival next month for a full day with live music, comedy, socialization, and unlimited food and drinks while raising funds and awareness for its cause.

Melt With You (MWY) is the Tri-Valley nonprofit's largest fundraising event, with music acts such as Salvage Title, Steve Hanson, School of Rock San Ramon, The 360's and Fleetwood Mask set to perform. Entertainment is an aspect accompanied with their message to encourage people to support their organization and celebrate its milestone anniversary reached earlier in 2023.

"The MWY23 Festival is an all-day event, and will bring folks from all over the county together to hear great music, enjoy great food and drinks and have a good time, and hear more about our organization," Jonathan Ziegler, executive director of the Crayon Initiative, told the Weekly.

"We will have various presentations during the event, which in turn provides more funds to ship more packages of crayons to the hospitals all over the United States. The festival will help publicize The Crayon Initiatives' need to get back to pre-pandemic shipping capabilities," he added.

Based in Danville, The Crayon Initiative helps children in hospitals obtain crayons to color and find joy. The nonprofit's goal is to bring happiness to children facing the stress of hospitalization through the process of transforming recycled crayons; collecting, sorting, melting and molding them into new ones they can enjoy and gain

freedom through creative play.

Bryan Ware founded the organization when thinking about how to solve the issue of crayons getting used by kids one time in a restaurant and then being thrown away. Since then, the foundation has seen local people anxious to support its cause.

"The community benefits by keeping thousands of crayons out of local landfills, providing a vehicle for The Crayon Initiative to repurpose these used crayons. Also, volunteers benefit by having a place and regular location to spend their time," Ware said. "Our volunteers have come back, and we have many who have been involved for five, six, seven or more years, so that is all terrific."

Since The Crayon Initiative was incorporated as a nonprofit on May 22, 2013, it has created 5.7 million new recycled crayons by rescuing 53.6 million crayons from landfills, providing more than 250 hospitals with over 713,000 crayon packs as of May 2023.

Last year, the initiative raised \$75,106 at its festival, with hopes of raising \$100,000 this year. With a goal of shipping 1 million crayon packs per year, every \$1.46 worth of donation provides one box of recycled crayons for a child patient, according to the nonprofit. Funds go toward shipping the crayons and creating more efficient ovens and capabilities to produce them.

"We need money and volunteer support to keep growing. It's that simple. Give 99 cents, do a fundraiser with us, or your company. Sorting events are a wonderful fundraiser," Ziegler said. "The majority of our techniques and events are based on getting our 'message' out to more people who are able to donate funds."

"We would like to expand our



programs, hiring art therapists and psychologists to help create additional programs with Child Life Services programs at these hospitals," Ziegler added. "We expect that we will need to create new programs, perhaps a kick-ball-a-thon or something like that for the kids to get involved too."

Other annual events hosted by The Crayon Initiative include the Crayon Classic Golf Tournament and the Sumner Lovin' Memorial Bike Ride. Offering fun activities with large fundraising opportunities allowed the nonprofit to bounce back after losing 70% of its revenue from corporations through sponsorships and team-building events amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We had to close our doors (during COVID) to volunteers being in the facility melting the crayons and we had to readjust our timing for shipping ... It wasn't easy, but we kept our digital presence alive and added to the downloadable coloring projects we offered," Ziegler said. "We still received crayons, and since our process involves a lot of heat (melting the crayons) we were able to handle them in a similar way as pre-COVID,"

Team members of The Crayon



FILE PHOTOS

The Crayon Initiative founder Bryan Ware works to melt and mold new crayons from donation piles, which are collected and sorted in large bins beforehand.

Initiative have appreciated the opportunity to embark on this journey. For Ziegler, he and other members have rediscovered the unique smell of crayons bringing back great memories of their childhood and want to pass that joy on to children today. They've learned that the East Bay community is resilient and willing to get out the message of the organization's mission and they're looking forward to the success yet to come.

"It's been a great time over the last 10 years. The next 10 will be incredible too," Ziegler said. "We

have to say thank you to everyone who has been a part of the effort. Friends, family, volunteers who have become friends, those who just came in for the first time this past month, as well as those who have been involved since day one."

The Melt With You Festival will be held on Aug. 12 at Madrid Ranch (at 57 Spring Lane in Danville) with doors opening at noon. Parking tickets are required for those driving to the venue. For tickets, donations and more information, visit give.thecrayoninitiative.org. ■

Comedian Bamford makes a comeback on new tour

Performing in Tri-Valley area for the first time ever next weekend

By JOSIE DE LA TORRE

Maria Bamford's comedic style ranges from unique storytelling of her acting out many personas with quirky voice impressions from her family members to describing funny or awkward moments of other people.

Also an actress and writer, the standup comedian has been critically acclaimed for her sets on dealing with depression, anxiety, dysfunctional family and mental illness.

"Standup was great for me as I had difficulty connecting with people on a social level due to OCD-intrusive thoughts — the controlled environment of the stage is very calming to me and

that remains to this day," Bamford told the Weekly in a recent interview. "My act isn't for everyone, so please YouTube 'Maria Bamford.' I have gotten feedback that I'm odd and wordy, so let that be your guide."

Bamford, who is performing in Livermore next weekend, started in standup comedy at age 19 at Stevie Ray's Comedy Cabaret. Now she has done voice acting for numerous characters for cartoon shows, starred in her semi-autobiographical Netflix comedy series "Lady Dynamite" and has appeared on several late night shows such as "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" and "Late Night with Seth Meyers."

Over the years, Bamford's



ROBYN VON SWANK

Maria Bamford

approach to comedy has changed as she grew and became more experienced in the industry.

"My time is done in terms of feeling like I need to be heard. I

have already made it a thousand times over and hope to support the next generation. I love performing and creating, but there is less drive in a lovely way," she said.

Bamford's material for her latest tour is a culmination of work since 2020. During the pandemic, she would hold performances over Zoom working from home.

"It is such a rush of joy to perform in person after a long quarantine. I still love a Zoom show, however," Bamford said.

"I have just taped a special for Comedy Dynamics, and so my current tour is the result of three years of writing and performing. I hope to gradually start replacing material — but safe to say that the topics of family, relationships,

mental health done with several character act-outs will be covered" she added.

Bamford will be performing at the Bankhead Theater in Livermore next Saturday (Aug. 5) at 8 p.m. This will be her first performance in the Tri-Valley area.

"I have not been to the Livermore neighborhood. I assume it will be lovely," Bamford said. "You have a poet laureate, Peggy Schimmelman, who mentions wild turkeys! You have a periodic element, Livermorium! You have a public library with a cafe and Shakespeare productions! My god, I might have to move."

Tickets are on sale now. For more information, visit livermorearts.org or call 925-373-6100. ■

Raymond William Laffin

December 23, 1935 – July 13, 2023

Ray was born and raised in Oakland, California to parents William and Vera Laffin. He graduated from Fremont High School, then attended Laney Trade in Oakland. He served in the Army for two years and after basic training, he was stationed at Ft. Huachuca, Arizona. Ray met his wife Ramona Valerio who also worked on the base. They were married shortly after in 1960. They had two children together, Robert and Steven. Earlier in life, Ray developed a love for ham radios. He turned that love and passion into his career as he worked as a radio mechanic for various airlines including World Airways in Oakland. Ray retired from Astro-Aire in Oakland. Ray was an avid F1 racing fan. Being from Oakland, he also enjoyed the hometown team, the Oakland A's.

Ray was preceded in death by parents, William and Vera, sister Lynne Hemer, his beloved wife Ramona, and eldest son Robert. He is survived by his son Steven Laffin. One of Ray's fondest memories was the year he coached his youngest son in Little League in 1975. Ray was a beloved husband, devoted father, who had many friends. He will be missed. Ray will be laid to rest next to his beloved wife, Ramona at Pleasanton Pioneer Cemetery in Pleasanton, California. Services will be held at Graham-Hitch Mortuary Thursday, August 3 at 10 a.m.

PAID OBITUARY



Herlinda Orozco

February 7, 1937 – July 16, 2023

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of our beloved mother and matriarch of the Orozco family. Herlinda was born in Los Angeles, California but her family was originally from Tepatitlán, Jalisco Mexico. At six months old, her family bought a dairy farm in Durango, Mexico where she lived and worked until she married our father at 23. In 1960 she married the love of her life Luis G. Orozco who passed away in 2020. The newly weds made their way to Fremont, California where they raised their five children; Luis Jr., Maricela, Jesus, Carlos and Nancy. In 1984, our parents, along with their now adult children opened our first Casa Orozco Mexican restaurant in Dublin, California and two years later another one in Livermore. In 1990 the family moved to Livermore in order to be closer to our businesses. Tita, as she was affectionately known by her ten grandchildren, was so appreciative of all the support that the community has given our family businesses throughout the years and always viewed our guests and staff as part of her 'familia'. Tita loved the Tri Valley area; the rolling hills, lush vineyards and welcoming people.

Our mother was surrounded by all of her children, grandchildren and in-laws when she passed, just as she would have wanted because she was all about her family.

Herlinda leaves behind a legacy that was built with a lot of hard work and love. She was extremely proud of her children, grandchildren and our two Casa Orozco restaurants.

She has now joined our father in heaven. May she rest in peace. Descanse en paz mamá.

PAID OBITUARY



POLICE BULLETIN

Pleasanton native charged with multiple sexual assaults, other reviews pending

A man who grew up in Pleasanton is facing felony charges in two sexual assault cases from multiple counties and has been the target of at least two rape investigations reported to Tri-Valley police departments, the Weekly has learned.

Austin Nguyen, 26, was arrested by a federal task force in his current hometown of San Diego last month on a warrant out of Santa Cruz County stemming from sexual assault allegations from last decade that were first reported to law enforcement in recent years.

The Weekly has confirmed that Nguyen, who graduated from Foothill High School in 2015, was also named to the Pleasanton Police Department and the Livermore Police Department as the prime suspect in separate rapes reported to those agencies. Both Tri-Valley cases were forwarded to the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office for consideration of charges, but the status of that review is unclear.

Nguyen, who had an initial court appearance on July 7 after being transferred to Santa Cruz County Jail, was released from custody on July 11 after posting bail, according to online court records. His arraignment, where he was expected to enter a plea to the six-felony complaint, was scheduled for yesterday, with results pending as of press time.

Santa Cruz-area attorney George Gigarjian, who is listed as Nguyen's retained defense counsel, did not respond to multiple requests for comment this month.

Charges were officially filed against Nguyen on May 15 following a multi-agency investigation led by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, with authorities alleging crimes against separate victims occurring in unincorporated Santa Cruz County and El Dorado County.

One set of charges applies to sexual assault allegations occurring between 2015 and 2016 against one victim, while the other set pertains to an incident in November 2015, according to Santa Cruz County deputy district attorney Michael Mahan, who is prosecuting the case.

Nguyen has been charged with two counts of sexual battery and one count each of sexual penetration by force or fear, oral copulation by force, rape of an unconscious victim and rape of a drugged victim, as well as two special allegations of committing serious felonies.

More than a month after the felony complaint was filed in the Santa Cruz County Superior Court in May, Nguyen was taken into custody on the related arrest warrant in San Diego by the Fugitive Task Force overseen by the U.S. Marshals Service.

He was booked into San Diego County Jail on June 28 and incarcerated there until July 5, when he was transferred to jail in Santa Cruz County, according to San Diego County Sheriff's Lt. David LaDieu.

Ashley Keehn, spokesperson for Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, confirmed that Nguyen was booked into their county jail on July 5 on the six felony charges. The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office is the lead police agency on the consolidated case against Nguyen and still considers the investigation open and ongoing.

Mahan said he did not yet have specifics about whether the two charged cases were tied to allegations from victims from the Tri-Valley, nor

about the status of the review by his DA's office of other investigations involving Nguyen submitted by outside agencies.

The timeline of the case reported to Pleasanton PD aligns with one set of charges in the criminal complaint, but according to Sgt. Marty Billdt, the department has not been informed about any charges resulting from their case. The Livermore PD investigation centered on a crime allegedly occurring in Livermore in 2014.

Both Tri-Valley agencies were first contacted in 2021 by individuals identifying Nguyen as an assailant in sexual assaults during the time he was residing in the area.

According to Billdt, someone reported to Pleasanton PD in 2021 that they were raped in the 2015 to 2016 timeframe in the Santa Cruz area, alleging Nguyen was the assailant. Pleasanton police forwarded the case to authorities in Santa Cruz County, the sergeant said.

Also in 2021, a person reported to Livermore PD that they were sexually assaulted by Nguyen in that city in October 2014, according to department spokesperson Azenith Smith.

Livermore detectives investigated the case and discovered Nguyen was a suspect accused in similar crimes in other jurisdictions, according to Smith. The Livermore investigation was completed and the case was forwarded to Santa Cruz County prosecutors for consideration of charges.

The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office declined to answer questions about other investigations potentially centered on Nguyen but not yet charged.

"Due to the ongoing investigation and criminal case, there are no further details I can release at this time," Keehn told the Weekly. "We

See **BULLETIN** on Page 17

POLICE REPORT

The Pleasanton Police Department made the following information available.

July 19

Burglary

- 8:05 a.m. on Valley Avenue
- 6:35 p.m. on the 3400 block of Boulder Street

Theft

- 10:41 a.m., 7700 block of Fair Oaks Drive; theft from auto
- 11:14 a.m. on the 700 block of Peters Avenue
- 6:21 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting
- 8:31 p.m., 1400 block of Stoneridge Mall Road; shoplifting
- 8:58 p.m. on the 3000 block of Bernal Avenue

Drug violation

- 2 p.m. on the 5200 block of Hopyard Road
- 7:44 p.m. on the 4800 block of Hopyard Road

Fraud

- 6:16 p.m. on the 6000 block of Stoneridge Drive

July 18

Drug violation

- 1:16 a.m. at Boulder Street and Valley Avenue

Theft

- 3:25 a.m., 7000 block of Johnson Drive; auto theft
- 6:46 a.m., 5500 block of Springhouse Drive; theft from auto
- 9:42 a.m., 5300 block of Owens Court; theft from auto
- 11:44 a.m. on the 5200 block of Hopyard Road
- 11:46 a.m. on the 5700 block of Johnson Drive
- 12:55 p.m. on the 5900 block of Coronado Lane
- 4:43 p.m. on the 800 block of Sunset Creek Lane
- 4:52 p.m. on the 1300 block of Stoneridge Mall Road

Vandalism

- 8:27 a.m. on the 4400 block of Black Avenue

Fraud

- 3:25 a.m. on the 7000 block of Johnson Drive

July 17

Theft

- 6:31 a.m. at Black Avenue and Harvest Road; theft from auto
- 10:35 a.m., 4400 block of Mohr Avenue; theft from auto
- 11:05 a.m., 5600 block of Owens Drive; theft from auto

PPD data shows car theft uptick

Trend reflects overall rise in stolen vehicles across U.S. and California

BY CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

Over the last few years, there has been a significant surge in car thefts throughout the U.S., with California specifically leading the nation in stolen cars — and Pleasanton is no exception to the trend.

According to the Pleasanton Police Department, there have been 89 motor vehicle thefts this year from Jan. 1 to June 30, which is nearly double the numbers from 2022 when the department saw 45 car thefts during that same timeframe.

PPD Sgt. Marty Billdt told the Weekly that “most of the subjects we arrest for motor vehicle theft or possession of a stolen vehicle are not Pleasanton residents.”

These numbers reflect a larger issue in the country where last year, over 1 million vehicles were reported stolen, according to data from the National Insurance Crime Bureau. California was at the top of that data chart having led the nation with about 200,000 cars being stolen.

“We are seeing vehicle theft numbers that we haven’t seen in nearly 15 years, and there is very little deterrent to stop criminals from committing these acts as they are just property crimes, like shoplifting,”

David J. Glawe, president and CEO of the NICB, stated in a press release. “We must reinvest in local law enforcement, provide the necessary resources for prosecution and community policing programs, and implement early intervention programs given the high incidence of juvenile offenders involved in vehicle thefts.”

According to a separate July 11 press release from the NICB, approximately one motor vehicle is stolen every 32 seconds.

“Vehicle thefts affect the livelihood of Americans across this country and cost billions of dollars each year,” said Ann Carlson, chief counsel at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, in the July 11 press release. “Anyone can be a victim of this crime. With the 25% increase in vehicle thefts over the last several years, drivers should be alert and take precautions to protect their vehicle.”

And Pleasanton’s uptick in car thefts this year isn’t something that is unique to the city, it has also been a problem throughout the Bay Area.

According to a 2022 “California Vehicle Theft Facts” sheet from the California Highway Patrol, approximately 18% of all the vehicle thefts

in the state occurred in the Bay Area. According to the fact sheet, 44.8% of those thefts occurred in Alameda County.

So what is Pleasanton police doing to help deter these thefts?

According to Billdt, PPD patrol officers — after being informed by residents — have been focusing on making their rounds at potential “hot spots, where there’s a high volume of activity” to help deter thefts. Some hot spot examples are places where there are a lot of cars parked, such as retail outlets and apartment complex, the sergeant said.

“Our department continues to be visible, not only in the hot spot areas, but throughout the city to help deter thefts,” Billdt added.

He also pointed out that the department has been successful in recovering more stolen vehicles in Pleasanton stating that just this year, the department recovered 49 stolen vehicles. Last year, he said that number was 41.

And even though the PPD recently reassigned officers in the special enforcement, crime prevention and traffic units for the time being in order to cover patrol duties due to a shortage in staff, there is a chance that more help could be



COURTESY PPD

Pleasanton police officers attempted to arrest two men who drove off in a Dodge Charger, which was stolen out of San Francisco, after breaking into a different truck to steal tools on July 17. The suspects evaded officers after crashing the stolen car near Eden Canyon Road.

coming to the city in the form of a grant.

Thanks to approval from the City Council, the city recently applied for the California Board of State and Community Corrections’ “Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant.”

According to the staff report for the June 20 council meeting, the grant would help city police address both organized retail theft as well as motor vehicle and motor vehicle accessory theft within Pleasanton.

The public safety grant would specifically “provide funding to support law enforcement services by increasing the police department’s ability to prevent and respond to organized retail theft and

to motor vehicle and motor vehicle accessory theft.”

But for residents who want to know how to deter car thieves in real time, Billdt pointed to the department’s vehicle safety brochure, which offers dozens of suggestions.

According to the brochure, some general tips include making sure your car is securely locked and parked in well lit areas, using anti-theft security devices such as kill switches and installing tracking devices. ■

BULLETIN

Continued from Page 16

are asking anyone with information or who may have been a victim of a crime involving Mr. Nguyen to report it to their local police department.”

—Jeremy Walsh

In other news

- The Alameda County Coroner’s Bureau has confirmed the identity of a 30-year-old man who died on the freeway in Livermore after being ejected from a sedan that rolled when the driver lost control while speeding last week.

Juan Rodriguez Ayala, whose city of residence is not yet known, was pronounced dead at the scene following the solo-vehicle crash on July 16, according to authorities.

The situation occurred just after 5:30 p.m., with California Highway Patrol officers responding after callers reported a burgundy Toyota Camry overturning on westbound Interstate 580 just west of the North Livermore Avenue interchange. Initial callers also said they thought the Camry was racing a tan Chevrolet Camaro just before the crash, according to the CHP.

First-arriving officers found Rodriguez Ayala, who had been a passenger in the Camry, dead on the freeway after being thrown from the sedan during the rollover, according to the CHP.

Witnesses later told officers that the driver of the Camry and a

second passenger — each described as Hispanic men in their 30s — got themselves out of the wrecked car and drove away from the area in a white SUV uninvolved in the crash, the CHP said.

Both remain at-large as of Tuesday afternoon, according to CHP Officer Robert Purl. Anyone with information about the fatal crash can call CHP-Dublin at 925-828-0466.

—Jeremy Walsh

- Former Alameda County prosecutor Amilcar “Butch” Ford, now a prosecutor for the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office, may be disbarred following a misdemeanor or complaint filed against him in Alameda County.

Ford is accused of giving confidential information on April 26 from the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office to attorney Michael Rains, who is representing former San Leandro Police Officer Jason Fletcher in a voluntary manslaughter case.

Fletcher is charged with unlawfully killing Steven Taylor at a San Leandro Walmart store in 2020, following charges filed by then-Alameda County district attorney Nancy O’Malley in September of that year. Taylor was allegedly shoplifting.

Ford also allegedly authored a declaration of support for Fletcher.

“It hurts everyone in our community when people who swear to uphold the law break it,” current Alameda County District Attorney Pamela Price said in a statement last week.

“Butch Ford broke the public trust and betrayed our office and the people of Alameda County. Fortunately, no one is above the law. Where appropriate, we will hold people accountable.”

But Ford asked last week how revealing statements by a prosecutor that are contradictory to his ethical obligations can be confidential. That’s what Ford did, he said.

Ford also denied authoring a declaration of support for Fletcher.

“I didn’t write anything,” Ford said.

He was asked to sign a declaration after he alleged retaliation and discrimination by Price’s office, he said, and that declaration was given to the court.

Ford’s alleged actions occurred when he was an employee of the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office and allegedly violated the California Business and Professions Code, which lays out rules governing the behavior of professionals in certain industries.

Specifically, Ford allegedly violated section 6131(b), which says that a public prosecutor must not directly or indirectly advise or take part in a defendant’s case if the prosecutor previously prosecuted or aided or promoted any action or proceeding in a court against the defendant.

Alameda County prosecutors said Ford in 2021 was assigned to manage the case against Fletcher as an employee of the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, which Ford denied. When the alleged assignment was made, Ford was head

of the office’s felony trial team.

Ford oversaw the Fletcher case for about 18 months and appeared in court on behalf of the District Attorney’s Office at least once, according to Price’s office.

Ford admitted being head of the felony trial team but said the law and motion team was overseeing the Fletcher case.

“I was never responsible for the case,” Ford said.

Rains is representing Ford in relation to his placement on administrative leave by Price’s office, but not in regard to the misdemeanor complaint filed against Ford on July 18. Ford has not retained counsel in the misdemeanor case.

Ford has been openly critical of Price.

“Pam Price doesn’t know what she is doing,” Ford said on July 19.

Ford said he cannot suffer any consequences for his actions because of California Labor Code 1102.5(a), which says that an employer cannot prevent an employee from disclosing information to a government or law enforcement agency or a public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry “if the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation of state or federal statute, or a violation of or noncompliance with a local, state, or federal rule or regulation.”

Ford provided the disclosed information to the court, he said.

“It can’t get any clearer,” Ford said. ■

—Keith Burbank, Bay City News

Pleasanton Weekly

PUBLISHER

Gina Channell Wilcox, Ext. 1171

EDITORIAL

Editorial Director

Jeremy Walsh, Ext. 1172

Livermore Vine Editor

Cierra Bailey, (650) 223-6528

Editor Emeritus

Jeb Bing

Staff Reporters

Nicole Gonzales, Ext. 1175

Jeanita Lyman, Ext. 1179

Christian Trujano, Ext. 1176

Interns

Joseph Chiu, Josie de la Torre

Contributors

Tim Hunt, Dennis Miller,

Nancy Lewis, Chuck Deckert

ART & PRODUCTION

Design and Production Manager

Kristin Brown

Designers

Linda Atilano, Paul Llewellyn,

Mary Watanabe, Doug Young

ADVERTISING

Account Executive

Karen Klein, Ext. 1177

Real Estate Sales

Carol Cano, Ext. 1173

BUSINESS

Business Associate

Lisa Oefelein, Ext. 1178

Administrative Associate

Carolyn Chan, Ext. 1174

HOW TO REACH THE WEEKLY

Phone: (925) 600-0840

Fax: (925) 600-9559

Editorial email:

editor@PleasantonWeekly.com

calendar@PleasantonWeekly.com

Display Sales email:

sales@PleasantonWeekly.com

Classifieds Sales email:

ads@PleasantonWeekly.com

Circulation email:

circulation@PleasantonWeekly.com



PLEASANTON PREPS

By DENNIS MILLER

Local track athletes competing at National Junior Olympics

Also: Fall preps season just around the corner — including debut of girls' flag football

It has been a great summer for the Pleasanton-based FTC Track Club as the team sent more than two-dozen athletes to the 2023 USATF National Junior Olympics.

The event has been taking place this week at the iconic Hayward Field at the University of Oregon. Hayward Field recently was the site for the 2023 U.S. Track and Field Championships.

Athletes from FTC have qualified and participated every year in this championship since 2016, but the club will be setting a club record this week with the number of entrants. The initial FTC participation saw just two athletes qualify for the Junior Olympics.

Over 2,000 athletes from the ages of 8-18 from across the United States are competing this week.

The 26 FTC athletes qualified in the following events: 100-meter, 400M, 800M, 1,500M, 1,500M race walking, 4x400 relay (four teams in different age groups), long jump, triple jump and high jump. Results from the 2023 competition are pending as of this publication.

FTC club has athletes from throughout the East Bay area from grade school to high school athletes. Coaches include Matt Beach, Karen Iseman, assistants Torre Anderson and Lesley Townsend, and head coach Jorge Quero.

The FTC members participating in Oregon are EJ Boeschstein, Shashank Bypan, Raphael Clark, Amandip Dutta, Isaac Gavino, Shiven Karnik, Viraj Misra, Zach Payne, Karththikram Raja, Harrish Rajakumaraswamy, Yousef

Salehi, Wyatt Sattley, Ian Sweeney, Aidan Williams, Janika Reese Caranto, Allison Chapman, Lizzy Fraher, Anwasha Ghosh, Danielle Hernandez, Emma Lyon, Annia McCormick, Holly Noden, Allison Oh, Alyssa Shah, Bhavia Tummala and Aaron Yang.

CYO basketball

The Catholic Community of Pleasanton CYO basketball program is looking forward to its 2023-24 season.

The program is open to boys and girls in grades 3-8 who are residents of Pleasanton or Sunol.

To register, please complete the application found at www.ccopcyo.org.

Important dates to remember: Player evaluations are being held Aug. 27-29; practices begin in

Pleasanton Preps sponsored by



**PORKY'S
PIZZA PALACE**

417-1600

PorkysPizzaPalace.com



**THE ROSE
HOTEL**

846-8802

RoseHotel.net



COURTESY FTC

Some of the members of the FTC competing at the 2023 USATF National Junior Olympics this week.

October; games begin the first week of November; and the season concludes in February 2024.

For further questions, contact the CCOP CYO basketball program athletic director John Baer at john.f.baer@gmail.com.

Fall sports are approaching

Even if it feels like we just started summer vacation, the "official" start date for high school sports is rapidly approaching!

Believe it or not, Aug. 7 is the first day our local high school teams can

start practice. For the fall sports, that means football, water polo, girls' volleyball, cross-country, girls' tennis, girls' golf and making its debut this year — girls' flag football.

The start of the fall season also means it's time for me to start pleading for help collecting results this year. It will take all of 30 minutes a week to get the results turned in to me for publication.

My deadline is the same — noon on Sundays. Send any information or get hold of me with questions at acesmag@aol.com. ■

On target business solutions.

Hyper local. Mass reach.

Advertise with us.

Pleasanton Weekly

We'll help you build your brand and grow your business.

Email advertise@embarcaderopublishing.com



embarcadero media



Entertainment

CONCERTS IN THE PARK
The Pleasanton Downtown Association’s popular Concert in the Park series will take place most Friday nights this summer featuring an eclectic mix of music from classic rock, blues and big band to today’s hits. 7-9 p.m., July 28. Lions Wayside Park.

FOOTLOOSE AT LAS POSITAS COLLEGE Footloose celebrates the wisdom of listening to young people while guiding them with a warm heart and open mind. 8 p.m., July 28-29. Tickets \$15-\$20. Outdoors, 3000 Campus Hill Drive, Livermore. Visit showtix4u.com/event-details/72858.

SHAKESPEARE IN THE VINEYARD “Much Ado About Nothing” explores love and friendship, honor and deceit and a couple of cases of crossed wires as newly-engaged Hero and Claudio play cupid to the constantly bickering Beatrice and Benedick. July 27-30, Aug. 3-6. Darcie Kent Vineyards. Visit sparctheater.org.

626 NIGHT MARKET 626 Night Market is back at Alameda County Fairgrounds. The iconic Californian festival features hundreds of food, merchandise, crafts, arts, games, music and entertainment attractions in an epic event spread over 10+ football fields of space. July 28-30. Visit alamedacountyfair.com.

SPAMALOT SCHOOL EDITION Spamalot tells the legendary tale of King Arthur’s quest to find the Holy Grail. However, diverting a bit from the true story, this hilarious musical features such oddities as a line of beautiful dancing girls, a flatulent Frenchmen and killer rabbits. 7:30 p.m., July 27-29, 2 p.m., July 29. Amador Theater. Tickets \$10. Visit firehousearts.org.

JAZZ IN JULY Jazz in July, an annual Livermore tradition, takes over the Civic Center Library with programs by top jazz artists. The programs are free with no reservations required. The Dan Marschak Trio with Danielle Perez, 2 p.m., July 30. Storytime Room, 1188 S. Livermore Ave.

TUESDAY TUNES The Livermore Cultural Arts Council presents Tuesday Tunes every Tuesday night at Shea Homes Stage. 6:45 p.m., Aug. 1, The Hurricane Band. 2400 First St.

DUBLIN SUMMER CONCERT SERIES Join for the eight-week Summer Concert Series at Emerald Glen Park Amphitheater during the Dublin Farmers’ Market. Local food vendors will be onsite and available for purchase. 6-8 p.m., August 3, Fleetwood Mask, Fleetwood Mac Tribute Band band.

KEIKO MATSUI AT THE BANKHEAD Acclaimed pianist, composer and humanitarian Keiko Matsui’s transcendent and haunting melodies have long sought to build bridges and her sonic cultural exchange has reached the hearts and minds of fans throughout the

world. 8 p.m., Aug. 4. Tickets \$30-\$60. Visit livermorearts.org.

BANKHEAD PRESENTS MARIA BAMFORD Maria Bamford is revered for her deeply personal and experimental comedy about mental illness and starred in the surreal, semi-autobiographical Netflix comedy series Lady Dynamite. 8 p.m., Aug. 5. Tickets \$45-\$75. Visit livermorearts.org.

KEEP ON TRUCKIN’ AT THE FIREHOUSE A tribute to The Woodstock Generation, Keep On Truckin’ performs Rock, Blues, Funk and R&B, faithfully recreating the musical experience of the greatest decade in music. 8 p.m., Aug. 5. Tickets \$20-\$25. Visit firehousearts.org.

Movies

DUBLIN PICNIC FLIX MOVIE SERIES The City of Dublin’s free outdoor movie series will be rotated through three different parks in Dublin. Movies begin at dusk and guests are encouraged to bring low-back chairs and/or blankets and dress

warmly. No pets are allowed. July 28, Turning Red, Dublin Heritage Park and Museums.

MOVIE MONDAY: FROZEN SING-ALONG All ages are invited to a free movie screening to watch and sing along to Frozen. Free popcorn included. 6-8 p.m., July 31. Rincon Library 725 Rincon Ave., Livermore.

LIVERMORE VINE FREE SUMMER MOVIES The Vine Theater in Livermore is hosting free summer movies with any concession purchase. No tickets required, doors open at 9:30 a.m. 10 a.m., August 1, Puss in Boots. Visit vinecinema.com/classic-nights.

PLEASANTON MOVIES IN THE PARK Grab a picnic dinner, blanket and low beach chairs to enjoy family film favorites every Thursday. All movies are free and begin at dusk. Amador Valley Community Park, 4455 Black Ave., Aug. 3, Jumanji.

Exhibits

FALCONS AT FIFTY Pleasanton’s Museum on Main’s exhibit

PET OF THE WEEK



TVAR

Have some Coffee

Coffee is an adorable, happy and affectionate young boy. He’s energetic, loves playing with squeaky toys, and going out for regular, daily walks. Coffee is a 1-year-old Spaniel/Dachshund mix. He has been a nice guest in his foster home where he is learning commands, mastering house training and sleeps in his crate at night. Coffee is available for adoption through Tri-Valley Animal Rescue. Visit tvar.org.

Employment

Safeway Inc. hiring Senior Product Managers – eCommerce Fulfillment Innovation in Pleasanton, CA. mult. openings. May Telecommute. Reports to Pleasanton. Must have legal right to work in US EOE. Subj. to backg. check. \$154,523-218,600/yr. Email resume TA.Applications@albertsons.com Attn: M. Gutierrez REF#0620RKC

Safeway Inc. hiring Senior Data Analyst (mult. openings) in Pleasanton, CA. May Telecommute. Reports to Pleasanton. Must have legal right to work in US EOE. Subj. to backg. check. \$153,088–158,700/yr. Email resume TA.Applications@albertsons.com, Attn: S. Taylor. REF# 0616AASS

Safeway Inc. hiring Software Engineer IV in Pleasanton, CA. May telecommute reports to Pleasanton. Must have legal right to work in US. EOE. Subj. to bckgrnd check. \$129,925-164,300/yr. Email resume TA.Applications@albertsons.com. Attn: R. Oliver. Ref # 0628STC

Safeway Inc. hiring Software Engineer (E-commerce engineering) in Pleasanton, CA. May Telecommute. Reports to Pleasanton. Must have legal right to work in US EOE. Subj. to backg. check. \$149,252-164,300/yr. Email resume TA.Applications@albertsons.com, Attn: S. Talib. REF# 0620FN

Safeway Inc. hiring iOS Technical Lead (Digital Mobile Apps) in Pleasanton, CA. May Telecommute. Reports to Pleasanton. Must have legal right to work in US. EOE. Subj. to backg. check. \$183,310–246k/yr. Email resume: TA.Applications@albertsons.com, Attn: S. Gibson-Cooper. REF# 0612NS

The Pleasanton Weekly offers employment advertising. If you wish to learn more about the employment advertising options, please visit PleasantonWeekly.com/employment_ads/.

“Falcons at Fifty: Foothill High School 1973-Present” commemorates the school’s fiftieth birthday featuring memorabilia and artifacts from throughout the school’s history, as well as clips from interviews with alumni and current and former faculty and staff. Now through Aug. 19. Visit museumonmain.org.

WATERCOLOR SHOW AT HARRINGTON GALLERY The California Watercolor Association features approximately 50 works of water-based media, showcasing artwork of the organization’s

Signature Members who have exhibited in three or more CWA National Exhibitions. Through Aug. 26. Visit firehousearts.org.

Government

LIVERMORE PLANNING COMMISSION The Livermore Planning Commission meets the first and third Tuesday of the month. The next meeting is 7 p.m., Aug. 1. Visit cityoflivermore.net.

Public Notices

PLEASANTON DENTAL CARE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 599025
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) PLEASANTON DENTAL CARE, located at 5980 Stoneridge Dr Ste 116 Pleasanton, CA, 94588-2723, Alameda County. This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
EUNICE JONG DDS INC.
4073 W Lakeshore Drive
San Ramon, CA 94582
California
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/28/23
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on June 28 2023.
(PLW Jul 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2023)

GINA COONS
222 W. Angela St. Apt A Pleasanton, CA 94566
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/19/23
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 03 2023.
(PLW Jul 14, 21, 28 and Aug 4, 2023)

MANE MEDICS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 598405
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Mane Medics, located at 1423 Broadway #1039 Oakland, CA 94612, Alameda. This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
LEXY LUSH COSMETICS LLC
1423 Broadway #1039
Oakland, CA 94612
California
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on June 05 2023.
(PLW Jul 14, 21, 28 and Aug 4, 2023)

IDN ELECTRIC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 599388
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) IDN Electric, located at 8132 Ensenada dr #4 Pleasanton, Ca 94566, Alameda. This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
JAKE SNYDER
8132 Ensenada dr. #4
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/17/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 17 2023.
(PLW Jul 28, Aug 4, 11 and 18, 2023)

ANAND’S PHOTOGRAPHY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 599411
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Anand’s Photography, located at 576, Gyles Place, Pleasanton CA 94566, Alameda County. This business is conducted by: an Individual.
The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
ANAND KUMAR SANKARAN
576 Gyles Pl
Pleasanton, CA 94566
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/06/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Alameda on July 18 2023.
(PLW Jul 28, Aug 4, 11 and 18, 2023)

Place a legal notice at
PleasantonWeekly.com/legal_notices/

Sunset presents proposal for redevelopment of Chevron Park

'The Orchards' is latest large-scale project seeking to bring more housing, retail to Bishop Ranch

By JEANITA LYMAN

Discussions on plans to redevelop the sprawling office park formerly owned by Chevron and reacquired by Sunset Development last year continued at the San Ramon Planning Commission, with officials from the company providing the latest information on their vision to reimagine the nearly 100 acres within Bishop Ranch as a key part of the city's core.

Sunset President and CEO Alex Mehran Jr. presented at the most recent commission meeting on July 18 the latest company vision for "The Orchards" — the name announced back in April for the 92-acre portion of Bishop Ranch formerly known as Chevron Park prior to the energy corporation's downsizing of its San Ramon presence last September.

The latest presentation saw developers seek to address concerns and feedback raised at the previous commission meeting on April 13, which saw input from commissioners and the public on the density and layout of the proposed project, as well as a buffer around Inverness Park and the possibility of single-story residences rather than multi-story buildings along the perimeter of the site while increasing density along Bollinger Canyon Road and Interstate 680.



CHRISTIAN TRUJANO

Sunset Development Company is working to advance a proposal to redevelop the former Chevron Park property (shown) with a mix of residential, retail and commercial uses.

Mehran introduced the night's discussion with the state and local context behind the vision for the ambitious mixed-use development with hundreds of homes along with retail and other commercial uses proposed for the site at 6001 Bollinger Canyon Road.

"Between the housing shortage, the changes in life that have been created by the pandemic, the economy, climate change and all the other things that are impacting our life in California, we are certainly at a pivotal

moment," Mehran said. "And I just want to salute the city of San Ramon for always being action-oriented and creating opportunities to advance our city for our residents, and this is certainly one of them and we're proud to be a part of that tonight."

Ambitions for the project were bolstered and inspired by other large-scale projects aimed at creating a central downtown core in the growing city, such as CityWalk, City Village and Dougherty Valley, Mehran said,

as Sunset Development officials continue a years-long quest to reenvision Bishop Ranch as a whole.

"For the past 10 years, we've been pivoting Bishop Ranch from being one of the world's premier office parks to becoming the heart of San Ramon, one of the world's best suburban cities," Mehran said.

"To us this means that we protect, preserve, and enhance our existing assets — our beautiful landscape, public realm and our Class A office buildings, and the new City Center, which is becoming a socialization hub for our city," Mehran said. "It also means we leverage what San Ramon is — a safe and high-quality city with great planning and top notch education and services."

Mehran presented preliminary plans for the layout of the proposed new Orchards mixed-use project made up of a range of residential, retail and office spaces that would be built on the former site of Chevron Park before the company's downsizing of its presence in San Ramon.

"It provides an accessible retail core along the primary artery on Bollinger, with experiential retail in the heart of San Ramon where it is certain to be successful," Mehran said.

See **ORCHARDS** on Page 22



2142 PALMER DRIVE, PLEASANTON
4 OFFERS, SOLD FOR \$2,350,000 (\$152,000 ABOVE LIST PRICE)

"Andrea worked with us every step of the way overseeing multiple vendors, acquiring multiple bids for our review then helped us to prepare our home for market. Because of her experience about what sells, we achieved a higher sold price than we had ever envisioned. You can trust Andrea's real estate strategy and instincts." Ted & Cathy Rigl



ANDREA ROZRAN
REALTOR®

925.858.4198
arozran@sereno.com
trivalleyhomesnow.com
DRE 01251372

sereno

CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE



This information was supplied by third party sources. Sales Associate believes this information is correct but has not verified this information and assumes no legal responsibility for its accuracy. Buyer should verify accuracy and investigate to Buyer's own satisfaction.

So This Is 40!

40 Homes Sold In Mohr Park

Whether You're Buying Or Selling In The Tri-Valley, Let My 24 Years Experience As A Fulltime Realtor Work For You!

OTHER RECENT SALES:

- 6205 Woodvale Terrace, Dublin \$2,560,000
- 2550 Skylark Way, Pleasanton \$2,000,000
- 4876 Merganser Court, Pleasanton \$1,925,000
- 421 Wayland Loop, Livermore \$1,225,000
- 2992 Lagiss Drive, Livermore \$2,550,000
- 191 Miramonte Drive, Moraga \$933,000
- 4673 Cristy Way, Castro Valley \$1,515,000



1616 COURTNEY AVE, PLEASANTON
36th Sale In Mohr Park - 9 Offers
Sold For \$2,455,000 - \$458,000 Above List Price



3504 KAMP DR, PLEASANTON
37th Sale In Mohr Park - 8 Offers
Sold For \$1,060,002 - \$175,002 Above List Price



1916 PALMER DR, PLEASANTON
38th Sale In Mohr Park - 6 Offers
Sold For \$2,235,000 - \$260,000 Above List Price



2010 PALMER DR, PLEASANTON
#39th Sale In Mohr Park - 12 Offers
Sold For \$2,425,000 - \$437,000 Above List Price



VENEMA HOMES

EXPERIENCE EXCELLENCE



We Are Pleasanton's Best Female Real Estate Team!



What can we do for you?

- In House Contractor
- Top Tier Marketing
- Dedicated Full Service Team
- Professional Photography
- Luxury Staging
- Local Market Knowledge
- 85+ Years In Experience and Expertise
- #1 In Client Relationships



Our Mission Statement:

To Bring Excellence to the Experience of Buying and Selling Real Estate.



1976 Via Di Salerno, Ruby Hill

5 Bedrooms | .50 Acre Lot | Listed at \$3,950,000

Liz Venema
& Lisa Desmond



3261 Novara Way, Ruby Hill

5 Bedrooms | .58 Acre Lot | Listed at \$4,800,000

Liz & Alexis Venema



6577 Stanton Court, Pleasanton

4 Bedrooms | 3 Bathrooms | Listed at \$1,949,000

Liz & Alexis Venema



3119 Half Dome Drive, Pleasanton

Representing Buyers

Michelle Kroger



7634 Fair Oaks Drive, Pleasanton

Representing Buyers

Michelle Kroger

VenemaHomes.com | Liz@VenemaHomes.com | 925.413.6544 | 660 Main Street, Pleasanton | DRE# 01922957

ORCHARDS

Continued from Page 20

“It provides our best office projects nestled within key sites.”

Mehran said that following feedback from commissioners that night, he was hoping to present a more detailed vision of the proposed project at the next discussion.

After questions and clarifications about the proposed makeup of the mixed-use project, Commissioner Eric Wallis said he was looking forward to seeing the vision more visually fleshed out.

“If you’re looking for feedback, I for one would appreciate a little bit more granular level picture of what you’re referring to so we can get a better idea,” Wallis said.

One clarification made by Sunset officials was that a proposed seven-story building in the center of the proposed project would consist of retail on the ground level with housing on the remaining upper levels, rather than being dedicated to one use or the other.

Commissioner Dave Curtis asked why Sunset Development was seeking a mixed-use development rather than more heavily emphasizing retail and commercial space, with calls to enhance retail options in the city by numerous residents coming in the wake of approved plans to shift the Marketplace Shopping Center to a mixed-use development that has been criticized as stretching the designation by focusing more heavily on housing.

Stephanie Hill, vice president of development and construction at Bishop Ranch, said that she and other officials with the

company had been sensitive to this point while developing plans for the proposed Orchards project.

“A piece of this feedback we’ve received from the community is there’s really a desire for a different type of retail,” Hill said. “Everyone loves City Center, but there’s also been feedback about perhaps having a different mix of tenants and having uses that are perhaps more retail or neighborhood oriented. So through our discussions we’ve talked about perhaps on the ground floor, it’s essentially florists or pharmacies or kind of corner markets, where it’s just a different type of retail.”

Hill said that in addition to feedback from residents and city officials, the idea was inspired by Santana Row, which serves as a retail hub on the ground level with housing in the upper levels.

In the first public comment of the evening, former San Ramon mayor Bill Clarkson applauded the proposed project for meeting the current and future needs of the city, but criticized the lack of information that had been available to the public ahead of the night’s meeting, with no staff report or presentation on the proposal included in the packet for that night’s agenda.

“I think it’s unacceptable — I’m talking to staff — it’s unacceptable that there be information presented this evening for the first time to us as residents and to the commissioners without it having been published Friday and discernable and accessible to residents to read and review prior to the weekend,” Clarkson said.

“It’s unacceptable and it’s disrespectful to each one of you that you’re being asked to

review material for the first time tonight on the fly,” he continued. “You should have received this earlier. I don’t put this on the applicant. I put this on staff having expectations or I’m going to put it on you guys to give clear signals to our staff that if information is unavailable the Friday before to the residents and to yourselves, they have to postpone the meeting. We need the opportunity to review material in advance and think about it thoughtfully.”

Brent Van Brocklin, a Dougherty Valley High School alumnus and current graduate student in real estate development and design at UC Berkeley, said he was excited about the proposed project but urged officials to push for a higher density option with 2,800 housing units rather than the 2,600 being proposed that night.

“I believe what our area needs is the high density alternative,” Van Brocklin said. “Not only does it allow for more foot traffic for our city’s businesses, but it also activates the

space and goes above and beyond to meet San Ramon’s RHNA needs.”

“With more taxpayers coming into our city, I think this will allow more money to go into our schools more funding for improving streets and our emergency services so I urge you and the community to recommend an alternative,” he added.

Commissioner Gary Alpert asked city staff to work with Sunset Development officials to find a time to gain more information and specific visions for the project following feedback that night, adding that concerns raised by residents around infrastructure, schools, and utilities would be addressed by the commission during review and discussions later in the process — which he emphasized is still in its early stages, and not moving at a rapid pace.

“I think we all appreciate how slow and methodical and incremental we’re getting this feedback,” Alpert said. ■

SALES AT A GLANCE

Pleasanton (June 13-16)

Total sales reported: 10
Lowest sale reported: \$840,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,930,000
Average sales reported: \$1,365,800

Livermore (June 13-16)

Total sales reported: 23
Lowest sale reported: \$550,000
Highest sale reported: \$2,550,000
Average sales reported: \$1,429,608

Dublin (June 13-16)

Total sales reported: 7
Lowest sale reported: \$710,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,920,000
Average sales reported: \$1,270,142

San Ramon (June 20-23)

Total sales reported: 5
Lowest sale reported: \$1,650,000
Highest sale reported: \$1,910,000
Average sales reported: \$1,850,000

Source: California REsource

HOME SALES

This week’s data represents homes sold during June 13-16 for Pleasanton, Livermore and Dublin.

Pleasanton

7674 Chestnut Way R. Faggiano to S. & D. Koya for \$1,650,000
4460 Del Valle Parkway Guthrie Trust to S. & M. Govindarajan for \$845,000
2934 Garden Creek Circle Clausen Survivors Trust to Foreverhome Properties LLC for \$1,045,000
4789 Herrin Way G. Yang to Wang Yang 1031 LLC for \$1,388,000
7461 Highland Oaks Drive Y. Liu to Ananya Trust for \$1,600,000
3282 Melanie Circle Msr Rental Properties LLC to B. & M. Jain for \$1,930,000
3409 Stacey Way Malcolm Family Trust to Y. & B. Peng for \$1,575,000
4074 Suffolk Way Lorelai Trust to R. & U. Mehta for \$1,755,000
553 Tawny Drive Boos Trust to S. & N. Nelluri for \$1,030,000
3883 Vine Street B. Kang to V. & R. Joseph for \$840,000

Livermore

1193 Avenida De Las Palmas Rivenes Family Trust to C. & M. Artin for \$1,450,000
2349 Bluebell Drive C. & J. Johnson to A. Fry for \$1,020,000
2460 Chardonnay Way L. & S. Zellmer to L. & J. Herrera for \$2,550,000
1459 Chianti Court M. Trunnel to D. & S. Mahapatra for \$1,988,000
1375 Columbus Avenue A. Szekrenyi to A. & K. Palanisamy for \$1,181,000
687 Emerald Street Dlugosh Family Trust to Halfon Family Trust for \$1,515,000
3099 Faltings Court Scott Living Trust to B. Hyman for \$2,150,000
701 Forester Court Dutro Trust to O. & O. Gyryk for \$1,500,000
881 Havasu Court Herro Trust to S. & Y. Zakizon for \$1,000,000
1866 Helsinki Way S. McMahon to T. & R. Martinelli for \$1,335,000

1271 Jessica Drive Patel Trust to J. & M. Adlparvar for \$1,550,000
853 Keystone Way Daugherty Trust to N. & S. Singh for \$1,305,000
4771 Maureen Circle Lance Family Trust to L. & F. Raju for \$1,405,000
790 Meadowlark Street Redwood Holdings LLC to N. & S. Satish for \$1,100,000
149 Misty Circle R. Swaminathan to M. & S. Ginjupalli for \$1,150,000
1253 Rebecca Drive Feltz Family Trust to A. & R. Chopra for \$1,700,000
1287 Regent Place Kihlstrom Living Trust to Yakuma Family Trust for \$1,868,000
3020 San Minete Drive Lee Family Trust to C. & H. Chou for \$2,050,000
3872 Santa Clara Way R. Koppula to M. & A. Limon for \$885,000
525 Selby Lane #2 A. Farhang to A. Mohammed for \$1,030,000
1472 Spring Valley Common R. Thomas to B. Wieskamp for \$550,000
5307 Starflower Way Kral Living Trust to W. & F. Alvarez for \$1,030,000
642 Vivian Drive I. & S. Dejong to R. & E. Gnanasekaran for \$1,569,000
2557 Wood Hollow Drive Okland Family Trust to Swanson Family Trust for \$2,575,000

Dublin

11937 Bloomington Way Ralston Family Trust to I. & J. Chan for \$1,335,000
5501 De Marcus Boulevard #425 N. Haycock to Y. Wu for \$710,000
3963 Derryfield Court N. & E. Dugan to R. & S. Srinivasan for \$1,450,000
3420 Finnian Way #135 A. Bajaj to M. Aires for \$735,000
6976 North Mariposa Lane P. & H. Cheung to S. & S. Majumdar for \$1,061,000
4771 Piper Glen Terrace A. & D. Mishra to Annam Family Trust for \$1,920,000
3717 Rimini Lane T. Liu to D. & K. Wong for \$1,680,000

Source: California REsource

ARE YOU THINKING OF MOVING?

Call/text CINDY (925) 963-1984 for all your Real Estate needs!!
She will walk you through the process!!

JUST LISTED

7785 LAGUNA HEIGHTS CT., SUNOL



ELEGANT ESTATE WITH THE MOST AMAZING VIEWS! MUST SEE!!

CALL/TEXT CINDY for an appointment

ENTERTAINER’S DELIGHT!! This ultra Modern home is located on a well manicured 3.53 acre lot! This approx 9,826 sq ft estate home has 7 total bedrooms including a separate 1,840 sq ft guest home. Must See the chef’s kitchen with Thermador appliances, a huge entertaining island with a solid surface, 2 dishwashers, a wine fridge and more. Dine on the many balcony areas equipped with a covered outdoor kitchen, TV and in-ceiling speaker system. The sparkling Pool is located adjacent to the Bar area, close to the glass enclosed wine cellar. natural light throughout!! The master suite and bath includes a huge walk-in closet!! Must See this amazing home!!!!

Offered at: \$5,998,000



SOLD

5274 Crestline Rd, Pleasanton
\$1,560,000



SOLD

35929 Carnation Way, Fremont
\$1,560,000



SOLD

3003 Briggs Ct, Pleasanton-Laguna Oaks
\$2,988,000

kwLuxury
HOMES INTERNATIONAL
Each office is independently owned and operated.

Call/text CINDY for details

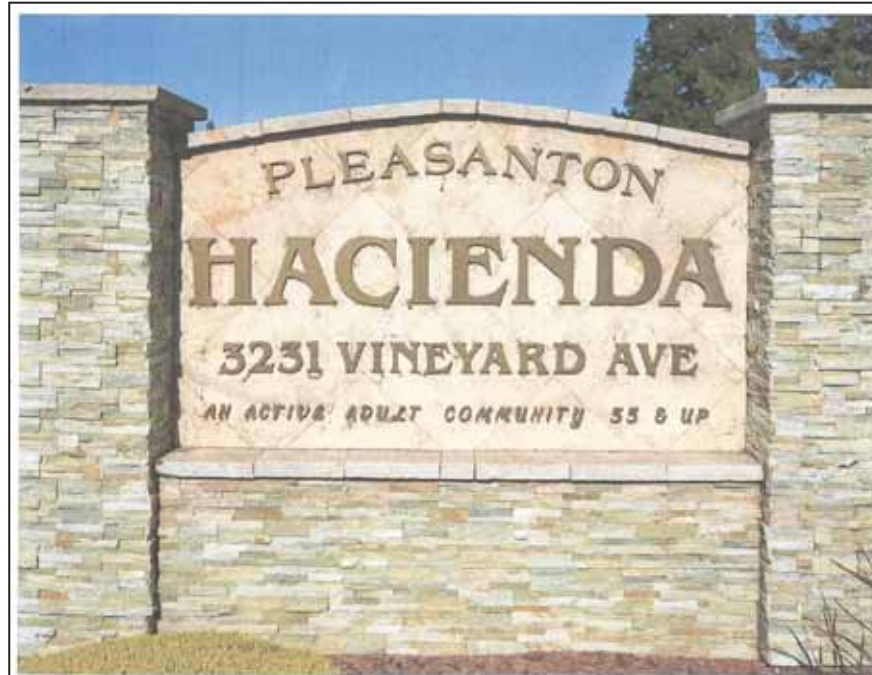


CINDY GEE
925.963.1984

CINDY IS ALSO A NOTARY

459 Main Street
Pleasanton, CA 94566
DRE# 01307919

cindygeesold@gmail.com



NEW HOMES FOR SALE

2 & 3 bedroom homes

Come enjoy a “resort style” community for those 55+. With so many amenities and activities there is truly something for everyone.

**Friendships flourish at the Clubhouse Community Center over a cup of coffee. Enjoy food at the Potlucks, the thrill of winning at Bingo, Bunco, Bocce, Billiards and so much more. A tastefully decorated and well-stocked library is available for those desiring a quiet moment.*

**For those seeking exercise try the swimming pool or the tree lined walking paths throughout the Park.*

**Access to Shadow Cliff Park is just outside the back gate.*

**Downtown Pleasanton is a short drive/ride away from the quaint shops and a variety of dining options.*

RIVIERA HOMES
Jan Morrison
925 750-7809



Beyond Full Service A Concierge Approach to Real Estate

If you're thinking about selling your home, now is the time. Call us today to learn how our proven strategies can get you the highest possible price for your home.



LOT
FOR SALE

2550 Hillcrest Ave, Hayward
1bd/1ba, 647+/-sq.ft on nearly 1 acre with views of the Bay. All utilities are in the property. House is a teardown/extensive remodel. OFFERED AT \$899,000



PENDING
WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

2436 Via De Los Milagros, Pleasanton
5bd/3ba, 3,837+/-sq.ft, 18,701+/-sq.ft lot
OFFERED AT \$2,459,000



PENDING
WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

436 Selby Lane, Livermore
3bd/3ba, 1,603+/-sq.ft, 1,815+/-sq.ft lot
OFFERED AT \$999,000



SOLD WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

4435 Arbutus Court, Pleasanton
4bd/2.5ba, 1,948+/-sq.ft, 5,532+/-sq.ft lot
SOLD FOR \$1,420,000



SOLD
\$165K OVER
ASKING WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

1549 Darwin Avenue, Livermore
3bd/2ba, 1,281+/-sq.ft, 7,100+/- sq.ft
SOLD FOR \$1,260,000



SOLD WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

5279 Crestline Road, Pleasanton
5bd/3ba, 2,877+/-sq.ft, 6,500+/-sq.ft lot
SOLD FOR \$1,971,888



SOLD \$176K
OVER ASKING
WITH MULTIPLE
OFFERS

2363 Woodthrush Way, Pleasanton
5bd/3ba, 2,898+/-sq.ft, 9,798+/-sq.ft lot
SOLD FOR \$2,125,000



SOLD \$101K
OVER
ASKING WITH
MULTIPLE
OFFERS

4931 Monaco Drive, Pleasanton
5bd/3.5ba, 3,302+/-sq.ft, 7,000+/-sq.ft lot
SOLD FOR \$2,600,000



SOLD IN
8 DAYS

2427 Raven Road, Pleasanton
4bd/2ba, 1,882+/-sq.ft, 8,007+/-sq.ft lot
SOLD FOR \$1,803,000

281 ★★★★★ Reviews

"Tim and his crew did a fantastic job with selling off my parents home. It was so hard dealing with the death of my dad, but he was always there to support me and talk to me. He felt like he was a good friend to me and my family. He also helped with the estate sale when I had no one to help me. His crew was also very helpful and sincere. I highly recommend him and his company. He also helped me find a home for my sister and was always there for me when I needed him. I have known Tim for 20 years plus and he continues to surprise me."

— Sabrina Peters, Pleasanton



Tim McGuire
Broker
DRE 01349446



Mark James
Realtor®
DRE 00697341



Eva Tia
Realtor®
DRE 02072764



Lori Olson
Realtor®
DRE 02004247



Aiden Kim
Realtor®
DRE 01983236



Sandy Sen Sun
Realtor®
DRE 02037984



Debi Bodan
Realtor®
DRE 01776265



Lisa Dayton
Client Services



Karen Carmichael
Client Services



View our website
Scan with your smartphone camera

www.timmcguireteam.com
925.895.9950



/timmcguireteam



tmcguire1



@owntrivalley



/in/owntrivalley

Compass is the brand name used for services provided by one or more of the Compass group of subsidiary companies. Compass is a real estate broker licensed by the State of California and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. License Number 01079009. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only and is compiled from sources deemed reliable but has not been verified. Changes in price, condition, sale or withdrawal may be made without notice. No statement is made as to accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footage are approximate.

COMPASS